■ Entertainment / A28

'Ibong Adarna' as a time capsule

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Soldiers attack Ka Roger camp in Camarines Norte

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Suspects point to handyman as Ramos slay mastermind

■ Business / B1

Neda puts 1st quarter GDP growth at 5%

■ World / A10

Leaders mark 60th year of WWII's end

RP graduates discover gold mine in call centers

BAGUIO CITY—There never used to be much to do after midnight in this university city except study or hit the lively bar scene.

Since Baguio got its first call center, though, nightlife has taken on a new meaning for hundreds of graduates.

At 3 a.m., row upon row of them stare at monitors, speak into headsets in the near

RP GRADUATES/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Tuesday, May 10, 2005 ★★ 50 pages 4 sections Vol. 20 No. 151 P18

website: www.inq7.net

Drivers renewing licenses to undergo driving test

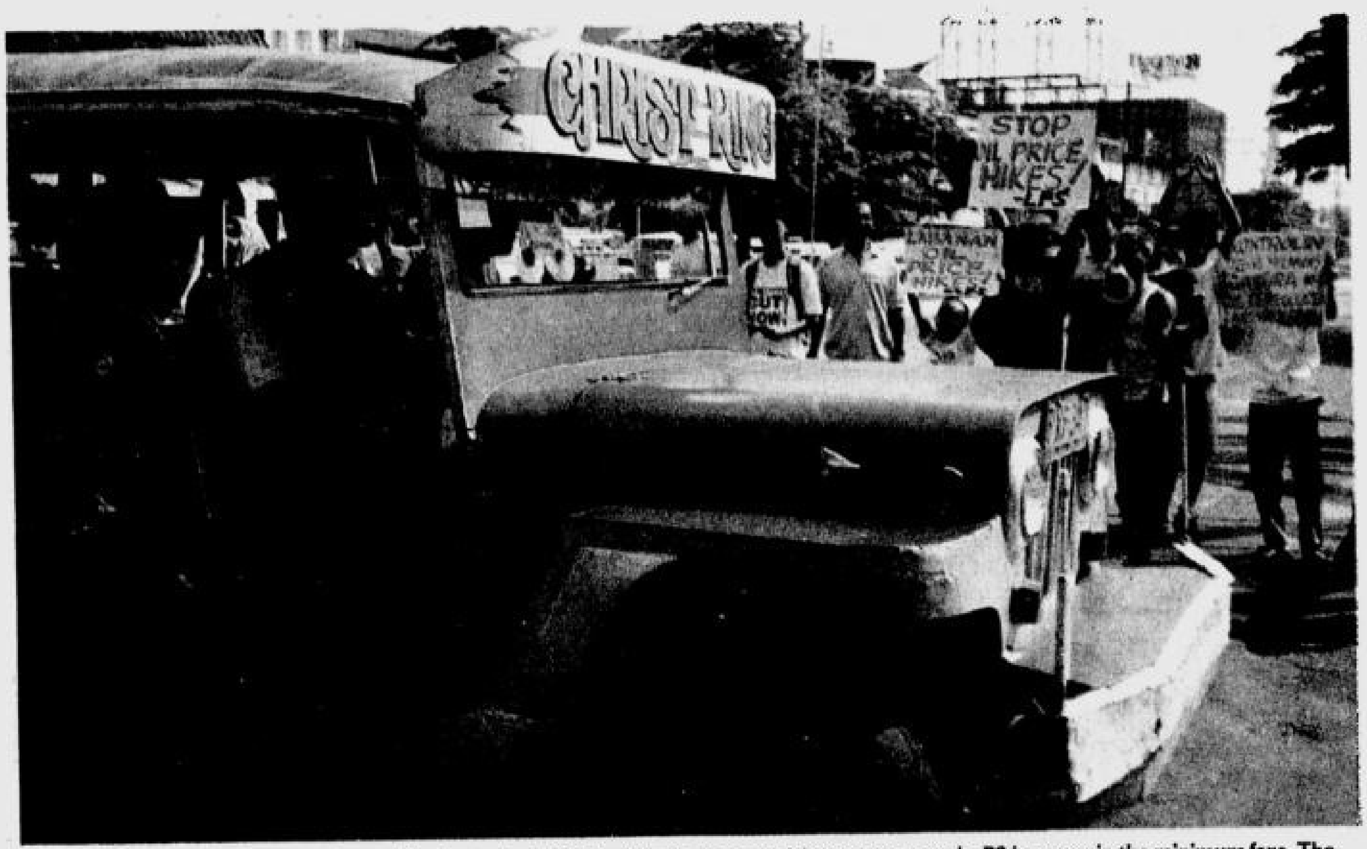
By Leila B. Salaverria
Metro

NAKU... MAY KIKITAIN D'YAN!

THE LAND Transportation Office will start giving driving tests to motorists renewing their licenses. It wants to make sure

DRIVERS/ A8

Jeepney fare up by ₱2



ALMOST three weeks after staging a strike that crippled Metro Manila, jeepney drivers are granted a P2 increase in the minimum fare. The larger issues of unabated oil price increases and the scrapping of the Oil Deregulation Law have yet to be resolved. REM ZAMORA

₱7.50 minimum rate starts May 26

By Clarissa S. Batino and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

STARTING May 26, the minimum fare in Metro Manila will go up by P2 to P7.50 for jeepneys and to P8 for non-aircon buses, according to the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board.

The LTFRB granted yesterday the petition of public utility vehicles for higher fares in Metro Manila, which will also apply to public vehicles entering the metropolis from Central Luzon or Southern Tagalog.

In a comment that sounded insensitive to the plight of the poor, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the increase was not significant. "Two pesos? That's just (the cost of) two text messages," he said.

At a briefing, he said: "This (fare increase) is justified because it has been a long time that the transport rates had been adjusted."

Bunye said workers need not fret too much about the fare increase because President Macapagal-Arroyo would deliver on her promise to adjust the minimum wage within the month.

Ms Arroyo has used the petition for a transport fare increase as the main reason for her recent order to the regional wage boards to raise the minimum wage.

LTFRB Chair Maria Elena Bautista said the 20-percent student discount would be honored only during school days. The discount will no longer apply on weekends, holidays and semester and summer breaks.

The 20-percent discount enjoyed by senior citizens will con-

JEEPNEY/ A6

Only ₱5.5M for sidewalk upgrading, AFP clarifies

By Dona Pazzibugan

BRINGING out documents to prove its case, the Armed Forces said yesterday it was spending only P5.5 million to renovate 2.5 km of sidewalks in Camp Aguinaldo.

Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual, AFP public information chief, took issue with an INQUIRER report that said the twin project to upgrade the sidewalks and replace their roof cover would cost P19 million.

Pascual said the P19-million figure was "exaggerated," stressing that AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu—so far—had approved only the sidewalks portion of the project.

"It is still under study," Pascual said of the more expensive plan to replace the roof.

Pascual focused his comments mainly on the issue of the sidewalks.

He gave reporters documents showing that Abu on April 20 approved the allocation of P5,567,235 to upgrade the sidewalks using "decorative paving blocks."

The INQUIRER story on May 8 was based on documents detailing the breakdown of expenses for the entire project—sidewalks and cover—prepared by Col. Cyrano Austria, chief of the 51st Engineering Brigade.

Austria estimated that the upgrading of the sidewalks would

ONLY/ A8

Compromise bill allows GMA to hike VAT rate

By TJ Burgonio, Michael Lim Ubac and Christine O. Avendaño

A COMPROMISE version of the value-added tax (VAT) measure that retains the rate at 10 percent but grants President Macapagal-Arroyo authority to raise it to 12 percent starting January next year "is as good as approved," Senate President Franklin Drilon said yesterday.

Breaking weeks of deadlock, the bicameral conference committee is set to convene today and approve the report that reconciled the versions of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

"We have a majority of signatures already," said Rep. Jesli Lapus, head of the House bicam panel. "It's just a formality now."

He said 25 of the 28 members of the House bicam panel had already signed a draft of the bicam report. As of Sunday, six of the nine members of the Senate panel had signed the report.

The committee's approval of the report paves the way for its ratification by the two chambers and the bill's signing into law by Ms Arroyo.

The two chambers of Congress have locked horns since March over the plan to boost revenues from the amended VAT, seen as crucial to fixing the country's debt problem.

COMPROMISE / A6

DE LA ROSA: No support for education reforms.

Ex-CHEd chair slams Palace, Congress

By Lito B. Zulueta

FR. ROLANDO V. de la Rosa, O.P., the resigned chair of the Commission on Higher Education (CHEd), yesterday said he left government after failing to get the support of Malacañang and Congress in reforming the education system.

De la Rosa said Malacañang stopped the closure of a nursing school belonging to the AMA computer school while members of Congress had pressured CHEd to rescind the closure of 23 other nursing schools nationwide.

He emphasized that his main reason for resigning was his desire to give more time "to the performance of my priestly and religious duties."

He said he would rather go back to teaching and spreading the Word of God than stay in the government service because of the poor support from some politicians.

"I don't have any misgivings about the President. She called me often and told me she would support me 100 percent in our attempts to improve higher education. What was lacking was support from our lawmakers," De la Rosa said.

De la Rosa turned over yesterday the duties of his office to Carlito Puno, who had been appointed acting chair of CHEd.

De la Rosa said Puno was qualified to head the commission because of his long experience working in CHEd. He urged Puno to continue the campaign against delinquent schools to ensure the quality of education in the college level.

For his part, Puno said he would pursue some of the programs started by his predecessor, including the campaign against substandard and poor-performing schools.

He said he would upgrade the quality of education in the college level and generate income through knowledge-based and land-use projects. He said this

EX-CHED/ A8

Retired bishop says group 'not the enemy'

By Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

RETIRED Bishop Julio X. Labayen, who along with seven other bishops openly condemned the Arroyo administration recently, has clarified that his group, the Kilusang Makabansang Ekonomiya (KME), was not aligned with those seeking the ouster of the President.

"We are not the enemy," Labayen told the INQUIRER.

He also expressed his desire to meet privately with President Macapagal-Arroyo in order to present the problems that needed to be addressed if her administration was to survive its shakiness.

Labayen also said that ousted President Joseph Estrada, under house arrest for the crime of plunder at his rest house in Tanay,

RETIRED/ A8

Media slay probers find lead

By Luige A. del Puerto and Ryan D. Rosauro
PDI Mindanao Bureau

AFTER nearly a week of groping in the dark, police may have finally found someone who could provide a clue to the identities of the killers of radio commentator Klein Cantoneros.

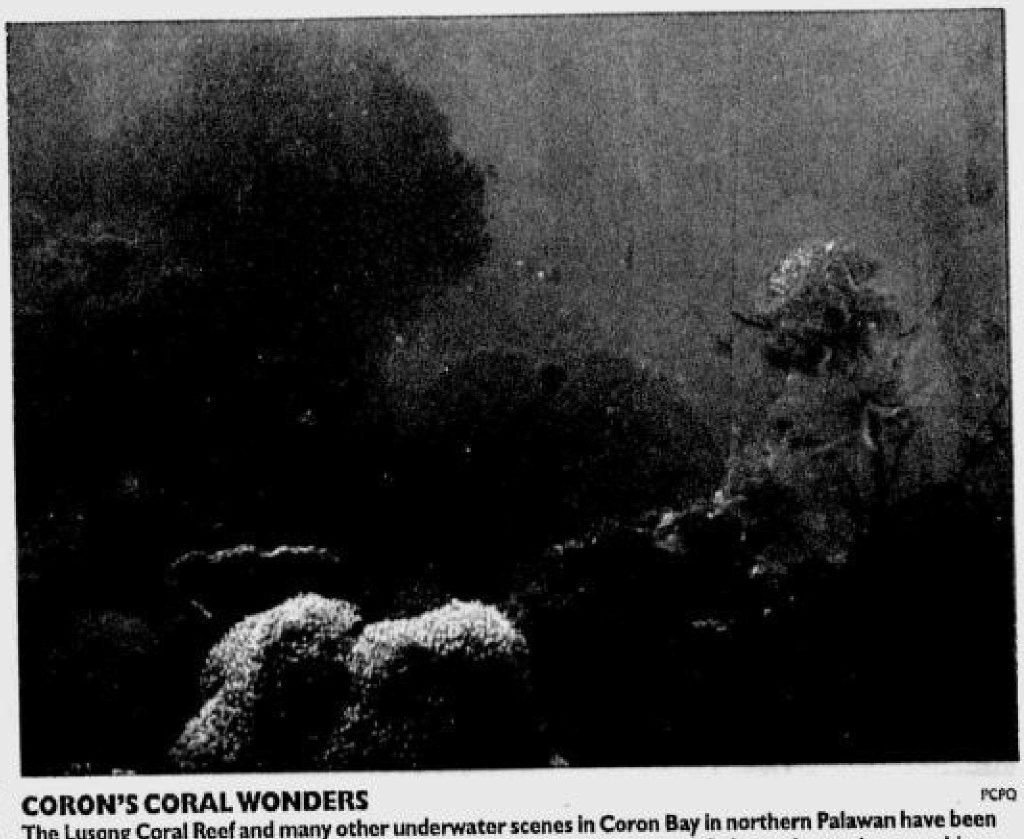
Task Force Newsman yesterday released an artist's sketch of one of three men seen in a restaurant where Cantoneros had eaten moments before he was ambushed in Dipolog City last Wednesday.

"The artist's sketch was [made] using information from a very, very reluctant witness—a witness who was inside the restaurant where Mr. Cantoneros had dinner hours before he was shot," said Senior Supt. Pedro Tango, task force chief.

Quoting the unnamed witness, Tango said the three men sat "very close to the table" of Cantoneros.

What made them look odd was that one of them kept texting and calling someone on the phone while stealing glances at Can-

MEDIA/ A7



PCPO

CORON'S CORAL WONDERS
The Lusong Coral Reef and many other underwater scenes in Coron Bay in northern Palawan have been the prime reasons local and foreign tourists are flocking to the province. At least nine sunken warships are found in the area.

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Mindanao including Palawan will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms in the afternoon or evening.
SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Second FRONT PAGE

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Last year's losers can be winners if they get GMA's eye...

By Christine O. Avendaño

WITH the expiration of the one-year ban on the appointment of losing candidates in the May 2004 elections, Malacañang yesterday said President Macapagal-Arroyo was considering naming one or two political allies to government positions.

"The President is open to considering some political friends or allies who were not successful in the last elections," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye told reporters.

Bunye said the appointments would "not necessarily [be] to Cabinet position[s]."

Asked if the appointments would be political rewards, Bunye would only say that the President had the prerogative to fill up Cabinet and other government positions.

But he said he personally knew the President was "considering" making some appointments "[of] some bright prospects from the other side or from the opposition."

"As to what level, we will only know once we see the actual appointments," Bunye said.

Bunye then dismissed as speculation a report that Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit had resigned.

"As of this time, we have not seen any copy of [his] resignation [letter]," Bunye said at a news briefing.

"Neither have we received any instructions from the President to make such an announcement."

As far as the Palace was concerned, Dayrit was "continuing to function" as health secretary, with Bunye saying Dayrit was on an "official mission" abroad attending a World Health Organization conference.

Norwegian diplomat raped me, says Pinay

TOP
IOLENCE
AGAINST
WOMEN!

A WOMAN uses a whistle as a protest during a protest spearheaded by Gabriela on violence against women infront of the regional trial court in Davao City.

BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

By Nikko Dizon

A FORMER OVERSEAS Filipino worker (OFW) has lodged a complaint with Norwegian authorities against a Norwegian ambassador who she accused of raping her nearly 15 years ago.

"He is a pig. He abused me and I will carry the pain to my grave," the woman told the INQUIRER yesterday in Filipino, sobbing as she recounted her ordeal.

A mother of three grown children, she requested only to be identified as "Virginia."

The diplomat has since been recalled from his ambassadorial post in an African country after news broke out in Norway that he is being accused of rape, Norway's biggest newspaper, VG, has reported.

Foreign Undersecretary Jose Brillantes told the INQUIRER in a phone interview late yesterday afternoon that the department had received a report on the rape allegations of a Filipina worker against the Norwegian diplomat.

Brillantes said he was unaware of the report because he had been out of the country on official visit in the Middle East when it arrived at the DFA.

Brillantes had returned only late last week.

Asked why the DFA did not mention this to the media, Brillantes replied: "It is normal procedure at the DFA to respect the privacies of the the individuals concerned, especially when an investigation is ongoing."

"The wheels of justice in Norway is taking its natural course. The DFA, for its part, will extend all legal assistance that the victim will need when this case is prosecuted. We will make sure that she is given due process and the right protection," Brillantes said.

In deference to Norwegian laws, the INQUIRER will not identify the diplomat-suspect until he is formally charged in court.

Bitter memory

The INQUIRER learned that the diplomat, who is in his 50s, also held a position in the Norwegian Embassy here in the Philippines in the 1990s.

Three Norwegian police investigators came to the Philippines last month to interview Virginia about the rape.

Virginia said the investigators spoke to her for two days, with one interview lasting seven hours.

National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC) Chair Roy Señeres is now assisting Virginia with the case.

Señeres told the INQUIRER that two witnesses had already come forward to help Virginia in her case against the diplomat.

"They are willing to give their testimony. But we would need more witnesses to build a strong case against the diplomat," Señeres said.

Señeres appealed to the other OFW-refugees with whom Virginia stayed at the diplomat's home in Baghdad, Iraq, in 1990.

A refugee abused

Virginia, who will turn 37 years old on May 28, said she had been working as a domestic helper for a family in Kuwait when the Gulf War broke out.

In an eight-page statement, she said she had wanted to go back to the Philippines but her Kuwaiti employer refused to let her go, forcing her to secretly run off via a service bus to Baghdad.

There, she and many other Filipino workers lined up outside the Philippine Embassy to seek repatriation.

Virginia, who was then penniless, said she and the other refugees slept outside the embassy because it could not accommodate their sheer number.

Food and water were scarce. There were intermittent gunshots. They relieved themselves in the sand.

Safe house?

Finally, the embassy informed her and the other refugees that some of them could stay at the Norwegian diplomat's house in Baghdad.

"I was so happy because he (diplomat) treated us well and I felt we were safe there," Virginia said.

At the house, Virginia and her companions also met "Joey," the diplomat's Filipino brother-in-law who worked as his driver.

On Sept. 8, Joey celebrated his birthday with a party. Virginia said she noticed the diplomat had several drinks and gave her a strange look.

Rape x 3

Then Joey told her that the diplomat wanted her inside his room. When she refused, Joey said the diplomat might get mad and send her away from the house.

Not wanting to be in the streets again because it was unsafe, Virginia said she reluctantly went inside the room where she saw the diplomat half-naked.

She said she also smelled smoke similar to tobacco.

Then the rape took place. The following night, the diplomat dragged her from the library where she slept with the other Filipinos and raped her in another room.

The rape happened again on a third consecutive night.

Coming home

She stayed a few more days at the diplomat's house with the other Filipinos until they were finally able to go home to the Philippines.

In her hometown in Bulacan, Virginia told her mother and husband of the rape a week after she arrived from Iraq.

She said she could not file a case against the diplomat because she had no money and no means to do so.

"*Tinago ko na lang sa sarili ko* (I simply kept it to myself)," she said.

That is, until she got a surprise visit from Joey in January this year.

Joey's story

Joey told the INQUIRER that he went back to Manila shortly after Virginia's group had left.

He said he tracked down Virginia in January and the refugees who stayed in the diplomat's house for a reunion.

It was only then that Virginia told him about the rape.

"She did not even recognize me because it had been a long time since we last saw each other," Joey said.

Joey said he wanted to help Virginia and called up a friend with ties with Norwegian lawyers.

Conspiracy theory

Joey's own family drama is the defense that the diplomat is now using against Virginia, Señeres said.

"The diplomat is saying it (rape accusation) is a conspiracy against him," Señeres said.

The wives of Joey and the diplomat are sisters based in Davao City.

In the mid-1990s, the diplomat and his wife separated.

Joey and his wife separated in 1999.

Shortly after, the diplomat and Joey's ex-wife married.

They are now living in Norway, Joey said.

Virginia said she did not know about Joey and the diplomat's family history until later when they were already pursuing the case.

Right time

"I am not letting anybody use me. This is my fight," Virginia said.

Señeres said Joey's visit to her came at the right time.

Norway has a 15-year prescriptive period for the prosecution of crimes.

Virginia's case would expire in September.

Señeres was hopeful that the Norwegian police would file rape charges against the diplomat in the next few weeks.

For Virginia, the visit from her new-found friend was "divine providence."

Police raid big 'shabu' lab in Cagayan de Oro

By Luige A. del Puerto

SOME 10 plastic drums containing what was believed to be methamphetamine hydrochloride, popularly known as shabu, were discovered in a warehouse in Cagayan de Oro City yesterday, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) reported.

The discovery of the warehouse in the Northern Mindanao city was an indication drug syndicates had shifted their operations to Mindanao and the Visayas, PDEA Director General Anselmo Avenido Jr. said in a statement.

They may have done so after "feeling the heat of relentless anti-drug operations in Metro Manila and nearby provinces," Avenido said.

The haul was estimated to be in the millions of pesos.

The warehouse in Barangay Bigaan, Cugman, had been under surveillance for four months, the PDEA said.

Anti-narcotics agents also found an air evaporator, oven, several flasks, a hydro-generator, a condenser and a chest freezer in the warehouse. Chemicals seized included acetone, hydrogen gas and activated carbon.

The equipment and chemicals are used in the manufacture of shabu, also known as the poor man's cocaine, the PDEA said.

But as in previous raids, no one was arrested when anti-drug operatives swooped down on the warehouse.

The PDEA said it was searching for Johnson Chua, alias Greg, Tsui Ngai Wai and Awi; David Sy, alias Tibe; Juan B. Tan and at least six other persons.

Chua had rented the warehouse, the PDEA said.

"These individuals are reported to be members of the Allan Sy drug group allegedly responsible for putting up the big shabu laboratory in Davao City," Avenido said.

The PDEA raided the Davao shabu laboratory on Dec. 31 last year.

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'ALA YORAC'?

Palace denies telling Señeres to quit post; surprise call bared

By Jerome Aning and Nikko Dizon

MALACAÑANG never asked National Labor Relations Commission chair Roy Señeres to resign and he is free to take to court the issue of the Department of Labor and Employment's administrative takeover of the NLRC.

DOLE Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas said as much yesterday even as Señeres reiterated he was staying put at his post and continued to assail President Macapagal-Arroyo's order for him to give up administrative control of the NLRC.

"Who ever said that? Malacañang never said that. It was he who said that he was asked to resign. He has never been asked to resign, never. So I don't know what the fuss is all about," Sto. Tomas told reporters in an ambush interview during the 23rd anniversary rites of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration.

Asked about Señeres' threat to take the issue to court, Sto. Tomas replied: "Let him."

Señeres, meanwhile, revealed yesterday that he received a surprise call from someone he described as a "Malacañang emissary" on May 3.

"He asked me if I was going to resign," Señeres told the INQUIRER in an interview yesterday.

"I replied: '*Wala akong balak mag*-resign, *pare*(I don't have any plans of resigning, friend)."

Señeres identified the caller as an official in the Arroyo administration but declined to give his name.

He said he received the call the day before the INQUIRER reported that President Arroyo had raised her suspicion that he was behind destabilization efforts against her administration and was even soliciting support from the United States Embassy.

Señeres said the call surprised him because he had not spoken to the official for quite some time.

"Ala Haydee Yorac," was how Señeres described the call.

Yorac had admitted Malacañang had pressured her into resigning as chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government.

Señeres said he felt the call was "exploratory"—to see if he would resign.

He said that after the usual greetings, the official asked how he was doing at the NLRC and if he would be interested in joining politics.

The official then advised Señeres not to say anything libelous if he was going to criticize the President.

"To me, this statement sounded like a warning," Señeres said.

Later that day, Señeres said, Sto. Tomas called him up and asked him not to resign as NLRC chair.

The President first confronted Señeres about the alleged destabilization plot on April 5, her birthday, in Malacañang.

She repeated the allegation on April 26 in a meeting with labor leaders.

On May 1, Labor Day, the President announced that she was transferring the NLRC chair's administrative powers to the labor secretary.

"In retrospect, maybe her [Sto. Tomas'] call was reverse psychology because she told me that whether I liked it or not, she was going to implement the President's order," Señeres said.

Señeres has repeatedly denied being part of a destabilization plot against Ms Arroyo.

He suspects a certain group is out to discredit him before the President.

"They are implying that I want to be labor secretary but I am not after Secretary Sto. Tomas' job," he said.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1767 Series of 2005

Erap lawyers present 'surprised' witness

By Nelson F. Flores

A DEFENSE lawyer in the plunder trial of deposed President Joseph Estrada yesterday pulled a surprise when he called the head of the government's prosecution panel as a witness.

Jose Flaminiano's attempt to present Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio as the defense's 36th witness surprised everyone in the Sandiganbayan courtroom and caused the early suspension of the proceedings.

It also led to an emergency meeting in chambers between the justices of the antigraft court's special division, Flaminiano and Villa-Ignacio in which the court directed both the defense and prosecution panels to submit their respective positions on the matter within 10 days.

The special division presided over by Justice Teresita de Castro was created for the sole purpose of trying Estrada's plunder and perjury cases. The other members of the division are Justices Diosdado Peralta and Francisco Villaruz, with Justice Rodolfo Ponferrada as an alternate.

Flaminiano told the court he wanted to call Villa-Ignacio as a witness because the prosecution panel had violated the Constitutional rights of Estrada to due process and equal protection of the law. He also defended his action by saying the defense panel can "present any witness" deemed important to the defense of its client.

He said the continued failure of the prosecution to file charges against the numerous "John and Jane Does" implicated in the plunder suit against his client, despite their being named in court by Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, showed that Estrada was a victim of "selective prosecution."

A visibly surprised and irked Villa-Ignacio told reporters after the chamber conference that Flaminiano's act was a desperate move. He said it was obvious the defense panel had run out of witnesses.

Villa-Ignacio said that if the defense lawyers truly believed the prosecution panel had violated the Constitutional rights of their client they should file the appropriate charges.

"Their act is obviously a dilatory move. They don't have any witness to present so they are now presenting us, prosecution lawyers, to save the day for them," Villa-Ignacio said.

Defense lawyer Rene Saguisag, meanwhile, asked the Sandiganbayan last Friday to rule on a motion seeking an ocular inspection of Estrada's home in San Juan to debunk Singson's claim that he had delivered, through Charlie "Atong" Ang, an Estrada crony, P130 million in cash from tobacco excise taxes to the former President.

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Students in Cebu school learn about planets from Nasa

By Abigail L. Ho

MANDAUE CITY—Remember those styrofoam models of the solar system—colorful balls hanging from string, positioned around a bright orange ball representing the sun?

How about those cross-sections of a human cell, also made of styrofoam?

These learning tools of the past have lost their place in Cabancalan National High School (CNHS) in this city as its teachers now use Internet-connected computers to teach their students about the wonders of science.

Ivy Joy Leopoldo, a young science teacher, uses, among other things, Web pages from the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) to teach her students about planets, meteors, black holes and nebulae.

The 70 or so students in her freshman science classes take turns using the 35 Internet-connected computers in the school's computer lab.

For lessons on the solar system, they are given the addresses of Web sites to visit—sites that show what each of the planets look like from certain distances and at particular angles. This is the research and computer-aided learning part of the course.

The other half of the class—since they cannot all use the computers at the same time— discuss the previous day's lessons or the following week's group reports. This forms part of the face-to-face interaction and discussion method that is traditionally used in class.

This integrated learning approach, Leopoldo says, makes students more appreciative of the subject as they can see for themselves simulations and actual photos of the things they are studying.

NO more styrofoam models for these high school students who learn about the wonders of science straight from the Internet.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CNHS principal Virginia Zapanta says that technology has become an important tool in education, making the partnership of education and technology a big factor in nation-building.

"Education is a partner, if not a requisite, to societal progress. Technology largely governs the pace of progress. The partnership of education and technology definitely answers our quest for progress," Zapanta says.

At CNHS, computer-aided learning is not confined to computer and science subjects. It is also used for subjects like math and English.

For math classes, teacher Sheila Carpela directs her pupils to certain web sites that feature interactive math lessons. Instead of the usual pen and workbook, the students do exercises online or using Microsoft Excel spreadsheets.

This way, the students are also exposed to applications beyond word processing, like Excel and PowerPoint.

Model school

The P2.3-million CNHS computer lab was donated by software giant Microsoft Corp. through its Partners in Learning (PIL) program. The lab is the first PIL Resource Center in the country.

With its computer-aided lessons, its computer-literate faculty and its state-of-the-art facilities, the CNHS Resource Center has become one of the models for information technology (IT) education in the Asia-Pacific region.

The school is also one of the Visayas' five top-performing schools. It is in the running to become an IT Model School of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec).

With its new resource center, CNHS also expects to be the hub of teacher training in IT in the whole of Cebu.

Microsoft aims to turn more schools in the country into centers of IT learning by providing the necessary financial and technical assistance to them, says Microsoft Philippines academic affairs director Sam Jacoba.

"Establishing (CNHS) as a model in IT education is part of our mission to close the digital divide in our public high school system and provide the Filipino youth with the opportunities to realize their potential in a technology-driven economy," he says.

Microsoft's PIL program in the Philippines, which Jacoba heads, recently bagged the top award for PIL implementation from the Microsoft head office in Seattle, Washington.

This means the Philippine program topped those being implemented in more than 10 countries all over the world, including India, Malaysia, Brazil, Thailand and Italy.

Corrections

IN THE TWO-STAR edition of the May 3 issue, a front-page story—"Doña Mary's 100th: 'A wonderful feeling'"—misstated that ousted President Joseph Estrada was in barong Tagalog and black pants when he alighted from a silver Toyota Altis upon reaching the Manila Hotel. Estrada was wearing a light colored jacket, a checkered shirt and light colored pants. He had a change of clothes later in the evening.

* * *

IN THE MAY 5 issue, a front-page story — "Taruc dies; 92" — misstated the age of Luis Taruc. He was 91 years old when he died. He was born on June 21, 1913.

* * *

The same story misstated the political party that Luis Taruc joined in 1935. Taruc joined the Partido Sosyalista ng Pilipinas (Socialist Party of the Philippines) — not the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (Communist Party of the Philippines). In 1938, the two parties merged.

* * *

The same story misstated that after World War II, the Hukbalahap changed its name to Hukbong Magpapalaya ng Bayan. It should have been Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan (People's Liberation Army.).

* * *

IN THE May 6 issue, a front-page story — "'His children were the people,' says Taruc son" — misstated that the Huks renamed their group Hukbong Mapagpalaya sa Bayan. It should have been Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan.

* * *

The same story misstated that Ramon Magsaysay was the defense secretary when Luis Taruc surrendered in 1954. Magsaysay was already the President then.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses: glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent, pending the appointment of a new readers' advocate, to Isagani Yambot, publisher, the same address and fax numbers as those of the city editor, and e-mail address: iyambot@inquirer.com.ph.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, May 10, 2005
7th Week of Easter

1st Reading: **Acts 20:17-27**
Gospel: **John 17:1-11**

Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; give glory to your Son, that the Son may give glory to you. You have given him power over all mortals, and you want him to bring eternal life to all you have entrusted to him. For this is eternal life: to know you, the only true God, and the One you sent, Jesus Christ.

"I have glorified you on earth and finished the work that you gave me to do. Now, Father, give me in your presence the same Glory I had with you before the world began.

"I have made your name known to those you gave me from the world. They were yours and you gave them to me, and they kept your word. And now they know that all you have given me comes indeed from you. I have given them the teaching I received from you, and they received it and know in truth that I came from you; and they believe that you have sent me.

"I pray for them; I do not pray for the world but for those who belong to you and whom you have given to me—indeed all I have is yours and all you have is mine—and now they are my glory. I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world whereas I am going to you. Holy Father, keep them in your Name (that you have given me,) so that they may be one, just as we are."

Commentary

Now Jesus prays to the Father asking for God to give him glory so that he might give glory to God. He has worked and glorified God in his words, his works, his disciples, his prayer—in everything. He has given away everything that the Father has given to him and they received it, as best as they could and so Jesus prays for them, his disciples and for all of us because we will need it. He prays that we will stay in God, that we will be kept in his Name and that we will be one as Jesus and the Father are one. We could spend years pouring over this prayer, seeking to learn what Jesus knows of God and how he loves him, glorifies him and serves him, knowing that he is rejected, misunderstood even by those who want to follow him and that he will be crucified—and glorified in dying with trust and love for God and forgiveness of those who kill him. It is close to the time of leaving us and we need Jesus' prayers. Jesus' prayers are with us always now and we know them in the gift of the Spirit.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CIVIL LAW (LAND TITLES AND DEEDS)—One-year redemption period over foreclosed property— Section 6 of Act No. 3135 provides that the mortgagor or his successor-in-interest may redeem the foreclosed property within one (1) year from the registration of the sale with the Register of Deeds. Under Section 7 of the law, if the mortgagor fails to redeem the property, the buyer at public auction may file, with the RTC in the province or place where the property or portion thereof is located, an ex parte motion for the issuance of a writ of possession within one (1) year from the registration of the Sheriff's Certificate of Sale, and the court shall grant the said motion upon the petitioner's posting a bond in an amount equivalent to the use of the property for a period of twelve (12) months. On the strength of the writ of possession, the Sheriff is duty-bound to place the buyer at public auction in actual possession of the foreclosed property. After the one-year period, the mortgagor loses all interest over it. The purchaser, who has a right to possession that extends after the expiration of the redemption period, becomes the absolute owner of the property when no redemption is made. Thus, the bond required under Section 7 of Act No. 3135 is no longer needed. The possession of land becomes an absolute right of the purchaser as confirmed owner. The purchaser can demand possession at any time following the consolidation of ownership in his name and the issuance to him of a new transfer certificate of title. After the consolidation of title in the buyer's name for failure of the mortgagor to redeem the property, the writ of possession becomes a matter of right. Its issuance to a purchaser in an extrajudicial foreclosure sale is merely a ministerial function. (Citations omitted.) (Justice Callejo, Sr., Second Division, Spouses De Vera v. Agloro, G. R. No. 155673, January 15, 2005)

BY R.B VERA

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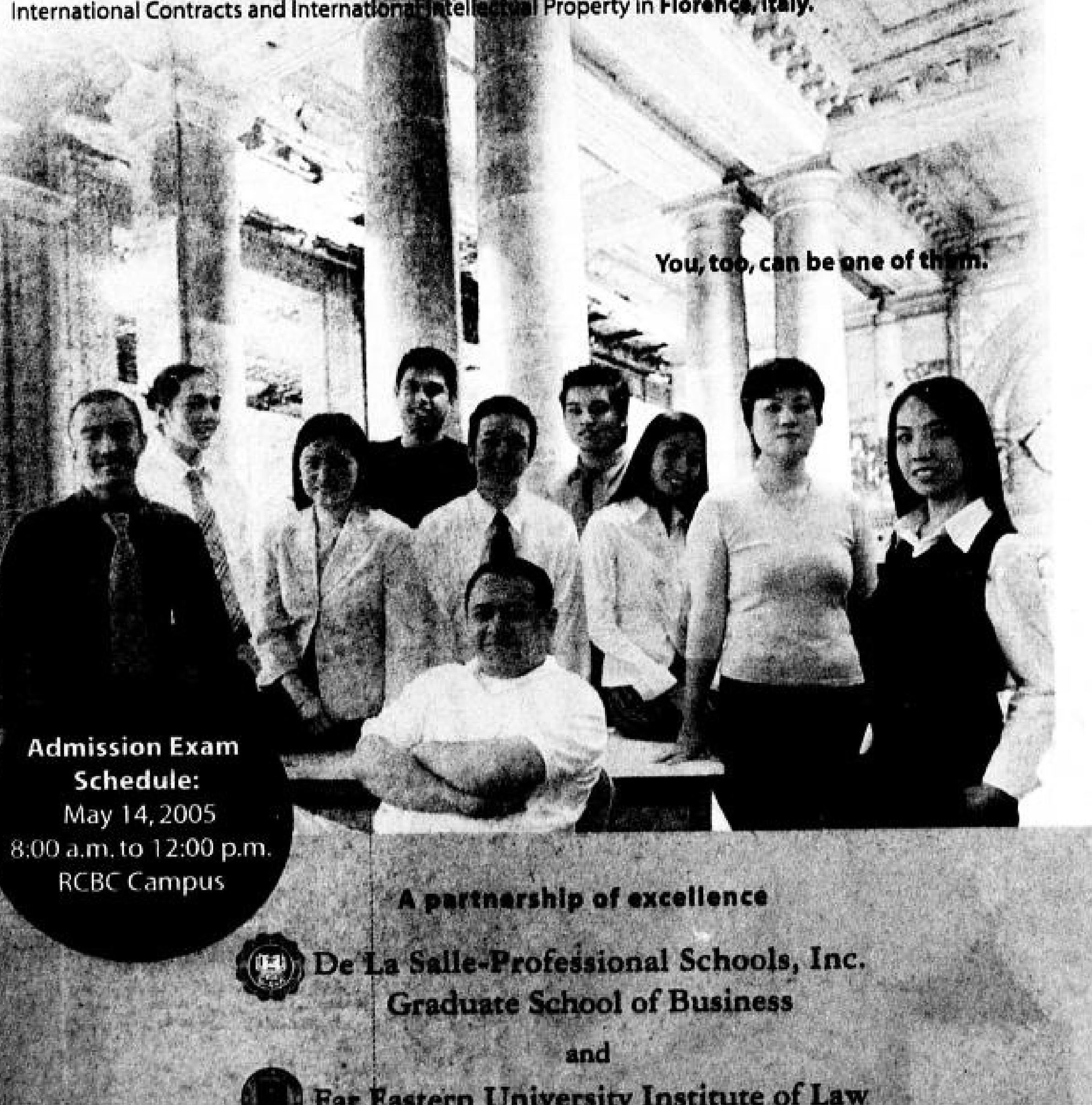
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Cheap imports killing RP car industry; solon seeks probe

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE CONTINUED influx of cheap imported second-hand cars is killing the country's automotive industry, a lawmaker warned yesterday.

Akbayan party-list Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales said that 7,470 automotive workers have lost their jobs as of this year, or almost 10 percent of the total number of employees in the automobile assembly and distributing sector.

"The House of Representatives needs to look into the influx of cheap imported cars into the country. What is most worrying is how these vehicles have affected the job security of thousands of workers who depend on the industry for a living," she said in a statement.

Rosales said the automotive industry employed about 100,000 people, the overwhelming majority of them involved in making car parts and components (40,000) and another significant portion working in assembly and distribution (16,000).

"I propose that the House look into the matter carefully before the continued influx of these used car imports kill the local automotive industry and put thousands of workers out of jobs," she added.

Rosales said that from a high of 162,056 cars sold in 1996 prior to the Asian financial crisis, domestic vehicle sales have plummeted to 88,074 in 2004, a reduction of about 50 percent.

And yet, records from the LTO on new vehicle registrations showed that almost 270,000 units were registered with it last year, but only 88,000 units were sold by Philippine car manufacturers, she said.

"What then is the reason for the discrepancy of 181,000 units? Most of these units consist of cheap second-hand imported cars, a lot of which are smuggled into the country," Rosales said.

"In other words, it is so easy to acquire such vehicles within free ports and to bring them into use within the country," she added.

Rosales said that imported cheap cars also posed a danger to motorists.

"Are these second-hand vehicles compliant with emission standards? Does the government have the capability to ensure that such vehicles are indeed compliant with emission standards?" she said.

'DANGEROUS' ALTERNATIVE MEDICINES

Health expert warns public vs cure-all drugs

By Christian V. Esguerra

MIRACLE cure. Scientific breakthrough. Ancient remedy.

If your drug or food supplement promises any of these, chances are you're being taken for a ride, a health expert has warned.

Dr. Kenneth Hartigan-Go, a pharmacology and toxicology professor at the University of Philippines, sounded the alarm over the proliferation of "questionable and dangerous" alternative medicines, including popular food supplements, in the local market.

Most of these products have been screened and approved by the Bureau of Food and Drugs. These could be potentially harmful to anyone who would take them, he warned.

Hartigan-Go noted that some of these drugs even come with a "money-back guarantee."

"What would you need that for if you know that your product is legitimate and has nothing to hide?" he asked in an interview with the INQUIRER.

Hartigan-Go exposed the dangers of some alternative medicines at the 35th annual convention of the Philippine College of Physicians where he is a fellow.

Last week, the World Health Organization warned the public against the prevalence of fake drugs, especially in developing countries such as the Philippines. Health experts estimated the illicit industry at $35 billion, with 10 percent of the drugs sold in the Southeast Asian market considered as counterfeit.

Though alternative medicines are not exactly fake, some of them, particularly the dangerous and questionable type, could harm patients.

A good number of these products are marketed—often aggressively—as "food supplements" or "herbal products" which "can cause anticipated harm," Hartigan-Go said.

"Many of these are nature products converted into pills," he said. "While we're not discounting the fact that some of them have beneficial effects, the results are inconsistent."

Some of them might have indicated benefits on animals but were never tested on humans. They also hardly go through "good manufacturing practice," which refers to a set of guidelines that ensures medicine quality, he said.

"We have seen Chinese products and even some from the US with steroids and metals," he said, without identifying the drugs.

Still, Hartigan-Go said, a number of doctors continue to prescribe "questionable and dangerous" forms of alternative medicine to unsuspecting patients.

"Can you imagine a doctor who studied medicine and was granted a license but is applying practices he never studied for?" he asked. "It's unfair to patients who go to him because of his expertise."

At the very least, he said, doctors who believe in herbal products and other food supplement should prescribe them as food supplements or herbal products.

"They should disclose and explain to patients that these are not alternatives to medicine," he said. "They should explain that if you take this drug for example, there's no guarantee that it'll cure this disease."

Patients faithful to herbal products and food supplements actually spend more on these supposed medicines marketed as cures, he said.

"Can you imagine a patient with limited money?" he said. "He actually delays diagnosis and cure on his illness by preferring alternative medicine."

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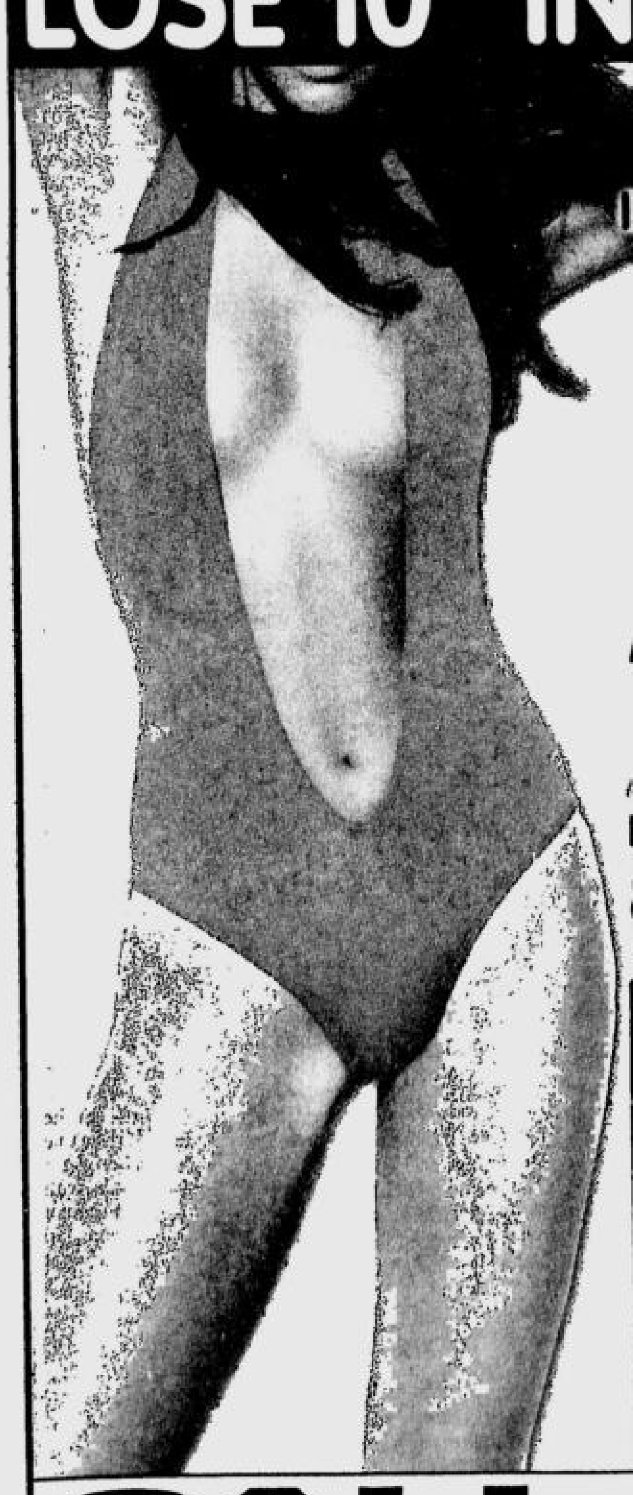

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Jeepney fare up by ₱2

From page A1

tinue all year round because the privilege is mandated by law.

The LTFRB also allowed jeepneys to collect an additional 25 centavos or a total of P1.25 for each kilometer after the first 4 km.

Regular metro buses will charge an extra 50 centavos for a total of P1.75 for every kilometer after the first 5 km.

Bautista said the board approved different jeepney fare increases ranging from P1 to P2 in the provinces after considering the paying capacity of commuters in other regions.

EXTRA earnings for jeepney drivers in Metro Manila as a result of the increase in the minimum fare is only worth the price of two text messages to commuters, according to Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye. REM ZAMORA

Provincial buses

The board, she said, had not acted on the petition of provincial buses to increase fares. Metro aircon buses have not sought an increase.

She pointed out that the fare increase the LTFRB granted was lower than the P2.50 being sought by jeepney operators and the P3 demanded by bus owners.

The National Economic and Development Authority said the LTFRB should have granted a fare increase of only P1.20 so as not to put additional pressure on inflation.

But drivers and operators said the 60-percent increase in the price of diesel since fares went up a year ago justified the new round of fare adjustments. Diesel now costs almost P29 a liter, up from P18 a liter in June 2004.

The LTFRB said it had to do a tough balancing act, weighing what PUV drivers and operators needed and what commuters could afford.

It was almost a year ago when fares went up by P1.50 for the first 4 km and 37 centavos for every succeeding kilometer for jeepneys and by P2 for the first 5 km and 38 centavos for every additional kilometer for ordinary metro buses.

Cost of living

"In approving the fare hike, we considered several factors. Among these are the prices of fuel and spare parts, the capacity of the commuters to pay and the cost of living and salaries in different parts of the country. This is the reason why we have different increases," Bautista said.

In Regions 1 (Ilocos), 3 (Central Luzon), 4 (Southern Tagalog), 5 (Bicol) and the Cordillera Autonomous Region, the LTFRB also raised the minimum fare by P2 to P7.50 for the first 4 km but did not grant an increase for the succeeding kilometers.

For Regions 2 (Cagayan Valley), 9 (Zamboanga Peninsula), 10 (Northern Mindanao), 11 (Davao) and 12 (Socsargen and Caraga), the board raised the minimum fare by P1 to P6.50, Bautista said. There was also no additional increase per kilometer in these regions, she said.

The LTFRB allowed Regions 6, 7 and 8 (Western, Central and Eastern Visayas) to raise the minimum fare by P1. Jeepneys in Central Visayas currently charge P5 for the first 4 km, while jeepneys in Western and Eastern Visayas charge P5 for the first 5 km.

Sufficient

Vigor Mendoza, lawyer for the transport groups, said the fare adjustments for Metro Manila were sufficient. But the lower fare hikes for the provinces could be a cause for concern.

"We all know that in the provinces, fuel prices are higher. Thus, they actually need a higher fare increase. But we understand that the LTFRB considered the paying capacity of those in the region," Mendoza said.

He expressed the hope that the government would give more incentives to PUVs in the provinces to help them cope with the spiraling cost of fuel amid a lower fare hike.

Mendoza suggested a higher diesel discount for the provinces that were given a smaller fare increase. Currently, oil players provide PUVs with a P1 per liter discount on diesel through selected outlets.

He said jeepney drivers incurred an additional cost of P30 for every P1 increase in diesel prices.

Inflation

Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri said the reasonable fare increase based on fuel price hikes should only be between 5 and 8 centavos for each kilometer plus 22 centavos per kilometer due to higher cost of spare parts.

"Thus, total fare hike should not exceed P0.30 per kilometer or P1.20 for the first 4 kilometers. If the transport fare hike will be managed prudently, wage increases will be tempered," Neri said.

Based on a study made by the technical working group of the Development Budget Coordination Committee, a resulting wage increase "given the petitioned fare increase" would raise inflation by one percentage point.

The peso's purchasing power weakens every time prices go up. A high inflation rate will erode any wage increase.

GMA hies off to Palawan

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday hied off to Palawan for an overnight stay reportedly to take a breather after a particularly stressful week facing an aborted destabilization attempt and reaping a storm of criticism for her leadership.

Even Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye was kept in the dark about the President's itinerary in Palawan which was not announced to the media unlike her previous provincial sorties.

"She [the President] is in Palawan following up energy projects of the administration," said Bunye, but he could not provide details including whether the President would go scuba-diving or not.

"I don't know; ask the one in charge of provincial events," Bunye said.

Bunye promised to give the media more details of the President's Palawan trip but no official statement had been made as of press time.

But Bunye was quick to deny the President was hiding something when asked why she kept her Palawan trip under wraps.

Sources in Malacañang reported that outgoing US Ambassador to the Philippines Francis Ricciardone was with the President on the Palawan trip.

The President's secret sortie to Palawan came on the heels of First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo's trip last week to Mindanao where he distributed free dentures to soldiers.

Compromise bill allows GMA to hike VAT rate

From page A1

Lapus said the new VAT bill would raise P39 billion this year before rising to P145 billion in 2006 when the rate would go up to 12 percent.

Economists have said the real revenue gains may be lower because lawmakers were assuming higher tax collection efficiency.

The bill is a crucial part of the package of tax reforms sought by Ms Arroyo, who has warned that the country faces a potential debt default due to its narrow revenue base.

Unpopular

But it could prove deeply unpopular, coming at a time millions of impoverished Filipinos are struggling with the sharp rise in the price of everything from food to power.

"We would like to congratulate them for their earnest efforts in helping our country [attain] fiscal order," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said, referring to leaders of the bicam conference committee.

At a news briefing in Malacañang, Bunye said the bicam had passed a version "that we believe would put a seal to our fiscal stability."

Under the compromise version, the President will be able to raise the VAT rate to 12 percent if the national government deficit exceeds 1.5 percent of gross domestic product or if VAT collections exceed 2.8 percent of GDP.

There is another condition: If the revenue yield is between P100 billion and P156 billion.

With the budget deficit reaching 3.9 percent of GDP last year, Ms Arroyo is virtually certain to gain the authority to raise the VAT rate. The gap is expected to narrow to 3.4 percent this year.

Politics

Asked why Congress was allowing Ms Arroyo to raise the VAT rate, Sen. Richard Gordon responded by describing the long drawn-out congressional tax debates as "politics."

"I was against that... but I signed it to end the debates. The other congressmen face reelection. They don't want to be blamed for the tax hikes," he said.

But Sen. Ralph Recto, head of the Senate panel, broached the idea of a standby authority for the President to raise the VAT rate to end the deadlock in the bicameral conference, which was triggered by the April 26 suspension of talks by the Senate panel after it decided to stick to the 10-percent rate.

Recto said the compromise version, which is projected to generate a maximum of P156 billion, was essentially a "Senate version."

Under this version, the exemptions enjoyed by power, petroleum and other sectors are lifted, and the corporate income tax is raised from 32 to 35 percent, but will be reduced to 30 percent in January 2009.

Power firms can pass on

Both panels decided to remove the no-pass-through provision in the House and Senate versions.

To mitigate the impact of the tax, both panels want to eliminate the excise tax on diesel, kerosene and other socially sensitive products, Recto said.

Even before the committee report could be presented to the plenary for ratification, members of the House of Representatives yesterday started to raise a howl of protest over the unilateral decision on the part of bicam members to insert and remove provisions in the proposed tax measure.

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero earlier told reporters that the minority might go up to the Supreme Court to block the implementation of the VAT should the bicam report fail to contain the no-pass-through provision, which is present in both House and Senate versions.

Excellent compromise

But Lapus said the final VAT version was an "excellent compromise" because both versions of the House and the Senate would be implemented one after the other.

"The Senate version will be the first to be implemented—10 percent rate, lifting of exemptions—starting July 1, 2005. While the 12 percent rate (espoused by the House) will kick in on Jan. 1, 2006," he said.

He also expressed optimism that the measure would pass even the scrutiny of the Supreme Court because "we expect that the (standby) authority to execute as directory, or a directive, not an option given to the President."

"The law is complete because first, the President does not need to legislate anything since the rate, date and conditions are there. Second, the standards are there," he said.

Safety nets

Lapus enumerated some of the circumstances that would exempt consumers from VAT:

- Business establishments earning less than P1.5 million (from P550,000, thus exempting sari-sari stores and bakeries).
- Residential dwelling from P1 million to P2.5 million.
- Monthly rental from P8,000 to P10,000.

All three items will be indexed every three years.

- Doctors and lawyers practicing in the countryside earning P1.5 million.
- Increase the presumptive input VAT from 1.5 percent to 4 percent (output VAT of 10, input of 4, a net of 6).
- For government infrastructure contracts, contractors and suppliers will pay the final VAT of 5 percent (withheld).

As to the zero-rate to be imposed on airlines, and exemptions for the shipping and banking sectors, Lapus said these were not new because "the exemptions are found in the existing law."

A former tourism secretary, Gordon said travel would be taxed although a parallel 2-percent reduction in franchise taxes might discourage the travel industry from passing it to consumers.

IRA for social services

The final draft requires local governments to allot their automatic 40-percent appropriation in internal revenue allotments to services identified by Congress.

"For local governments every time you raise revenue in this country, local governments will get 40 percent in IRA. But 50 percent of that fund will be devoted to education, to the environment and to health premiums," Gordon said.

Mayor Nestor Fongwan of La Trinidad, Benguet, who is the president of the Benguet Mayors' League, said the Local Government Code granted local governments autonomy. "[The impositions] may not be constitutional," he said.

Gordon, however, said "the IRA is not constitutionally mandated," and must therefore be defined by legislators. "And they should also sacrifice," he added.

With reservations

The six senators, who signed the report of the compromise version, were Recto, Manuel Villar Jr., Gordon, Rodolfo Biazon, Edgardo Angara and Juan Ponce Enrile.

Enrile said he signed the report with reservations, noting that the amendment he had sought on the exemption from VAT of electricity to be used by residential end-users was not included.

"I signed the report as a report. But it doesn't mean that I agree with the contents," he told reporters. "As a member of the bicameral conference committee, I either sign it or not sign it, but I believe as a matter of duty I have to sign it."

Against

Senators Sergio Osmeña III and Joker Arroyo, who did not sign the report along with Sen. Jamby Madrigal, vowed to vote against it during the bicameral conference and plenary.

"My vote is no because the Senate passed a 10-percent rate and the bicam increased it to 12 percent... I think that was unfair," said Osmeña, who had questioned the approval of the report "outside the accepted legislative process."

"The bicam is meeting [today] and I will vote against it... the increase," Arroyo said, stressing that the C-D-E social classes "could not absorb" the increase in VAT rate.

He also charged that the deletion of the no pass-through provision in both the Senate and House versions of the bill had "fictionalized" the tax measure.

"It is as if the IPPs (independent power producers) will be VAT-ed at 12 percent, but in reality they will not be VAT-ed at all. So I call it fictionalized VAT. In fact, they're VAT-free," he said.

Any tax on the IPPs, he pointed out, would be passed on to National Power Corp. and eventually to the taxpayers in the absence of the no pass-through provision. *With reports from Vincent Cabreza and Elmer Kristian Dauigoy, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

RP graduates discover gold mine in call centers

From page A1

flawless American accent that gives the Philippines an edge in its battle with India for the fast-growing outsourcing market.

Faced with rising wage costs as the pool of qualified candidates in Metro Manila and Cebu City become scarce, outsourcing firms are moving to parts of the country that are still rich in English-speaking graduates willing to work for P12,000 a month.

In Baguio, more than a third of the 300,000 population are students. So far there is only one call center, run by ClientLogic Corp., a unit of Canadian firm Onex Corp.

"It's a gold mine," said Ramon Dimacali, head of industry group Outsource Philippines, who sees benefits beyond pay rates that are a third lower than Manila's for the same caliber of graduate.

"There's definitely higher loyalty, less attrition, less churn," he said.

Philippine call centers have higher average staff tenure and better customer satisfaction ratings than India, industry studies have shown.

But there are signs the boom, a rare bright spot for the indebted economy in recent years, could soon start to run up against the shortcomings of an under-funded education system, poor infrastructure and a limited labor supply.

Bangalore alone churns out nearly as many graduates each year as the 400,000 produced by the whole Philippines, and Indian workers are renowned for their expertise in areas like engineering, which opens the door to high-end outsourcing jobs.

Barriers to growth

When outsourcing firms such as Convergys Corp., Nasdaq-listed PeopleSupport and Sykes Enterprises started expanding in Manila a few years back, they would hire more than 10 out of every 100 applicants.

Industry officials said that ratio had now fallen to as low as two out of 100.

"We're facing a hiring crunch," said Carol Dominguez, president of recruitment firm John Clements Consultants.

"You're losing more people than you can hire. Call centers have to figure out a retention strategy." Outsourcing firms in India are facing the same problem, but Dominguez said India had done a better job moving beyond call centers to higher-margin jobs like animation, accounting and financial analysis.

That could cost the Philippines in the years ahead.

"In a few years, they're going to develop technology that will take over some of that voice work," Dominguez said. "Then we're going to lose jobs here."

Competition is also heating up.

In 2001, only about six countries were seen as serious competitors for the outsourcing dollar. Now there are about 30, with Eastern Europe, China and South Africa among them.

London-based research firm Datamonitor said in a February report that the Philippines was a strong competitor to India for the nearly 250,000 new call center jobs expected to be created in the two countries through 2009.

The Philippines now has around 60,000 outsourcing jobs, compared to 245,000 in India, according to Datamonitor.

But Datamonitor analyst Peter Ryan said barriers to growth were also emerging.

"There is definitely the issue of good graduates outside of the major centers, a phenomenon that is being felt in many other offshore locations," Ryan told Reuters in an email response.

"There is also the worry of technology in outer locations not necessarily being at the level necessary to accommodate large-scale contact center operations."

Davao City got its first call center last October, and Iloilo City has lured two call centers to set up there. But most of the call centers are in Manila and Cebu.

Social impact

The stakes, economic and social, are high.

Dominguez, a former banker, said the Philippines had the potential to add $1 billion to its $89-billion GDP (gross domestic product) by 2010 if it achieved its potential of creating 250,000 outsourcing jobs.

At its current rate, though, it was on course to fall short of that by about 100,000 jobs.

In Baguio, graduates now feel they have a realistic chance of staying in their hometown instead of joining the exodus overseas to escape one of Asia's highest unemployment rates.

"It's like the downstream effect," said Jose Ferreros, director of operations at ClientLogic's Baguio plant. "The benefit is not just on people we hire but on the transport industry, the food industry."

Ferreros plans to ramp up the staff numbers at ClientLogic's Baguio center to 825 in the months ahead.

The competition, with India and other firms, is palpable as ClientLogic's 350 agents push on through the night.

Clients give their feedback on the agents' performance every day for comparison with rival call centers in India and elsewhere in the Philippines.

On one wall, individual agents' names are pinned on a map of the United States, indicating southern states where they have achieved a perfect customer satisfaction rating.

The first agent to get a full house of states wins a Sony PlayStation 2.

"The opportunity for growth here is very vast," said Michael Batac, a 23-year-old team leader and coach at ClientLogic.

"Now I have this position I'm thinking of staying here in the Philippines. If I can make it here, why do I need to go abroad?"

Reuters

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Media slay probers find lead

From page A1

toneros, the supposed witness said.

After 10 minutes, the trio went out without ordering anything, the witness said.

Tango said Cantoneros ate at No. 8 Food Park in Dipolog between 10:30 p.m. and 12 midnight Tuesday.

An hour later, three men on board a motorcycle shot him on a highway. He suffered at least six bullet wounds and died in a local hospital.

The Samahang Plaridel and 14 other media organizations yesterday warned that the slaying of journalists posed "a grave and common danger to our struggling democracy."

"Free and independent journalists are facing virtual extinction through the final form of censorship: murder," the media groups said in a "Declaration of Common Concern."

They said the unabated slaying of journalists posed a serious danger to what Alexis de Tocqueville called "the chief instrument of freedom." As such, the groups said, "the danger to a free press is a danger to society itself."

Obsessive phone caller

Tango said the witness described the man who kept using his mobile phone while glancing at Cantoneros as 5'7" to 5'8" tall, in his 40s, and thin.

The other two were in their mid-30s, medium built, and a few inches shorter than the first man, the witness told investigators.

Cantoneros was the latest of a growing list of journalists killed in the country since democracy was restored in 1986. The killings had prompted the foreign-based Committee to Protect Journalists to describe the Philippines as the most murderous place for reporters since 2000.

Remembering faces

"Each has his own way of remembering a feature (of a person)," Tango said, explaining how the supposed witness remembered details about the man with the cell phone. "Maybe the witness' attention was drawn to his frequent texting and calling."

More than five days after Cantoneros was murdered, police were still having a hard time convincing people to cooperate with the investigators.

Police believed that Cantoneros was killed because of his critical commentaries over radio dxAA-FM.

Lomibao takes charge

Tango said police had other "reluctant witnesses" who feared reprisals if they talked.

Last weekend, Philippine National Police Director General Arturo Lomibao dropped Supt. Jeuful Adriatico, chief of the Zamboanga del Norte police, and Supt. Tomas Hizon, chief of the Dipolog police, from the task force, on the request of the broadcaster's family.

Lomibao has taken over the investigation of high-profile cases involving murdered journalists, amid outcries from press groups against the unchecked killing of media people.

"We're glad to report that PNP Director General Lomibao is taking a direct hand," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye told reporters. "He is now hands on as far as high-profile cases are concerned."

Peter the Rock

In Dipolog, a former colleague of Cantoneros has expressed his intention to cooperate with authorities, said Jett Opilac, manager of dxAA-FM, the station where Cantoneros worked.

Opilac said the colleague, whom he identified only as "Peter The Rock," called him to say he was available for questioning by investigators.

"But he requested that he be represented by his lawyer, Paulino Gudmalin," he said.

Opilac said Peter the Rock had denied he was with Cantoneros on the night the slain journalist dined at the Dipolog restaurant.

Fear for his life

Peter the Rock, who co-anchored with Cantoneros the public affairs program "Nasud, Pagmata Na" on radio, had left Dipolog, fearing for his life.

Police earlier said Peter the Rock was one of the last persons whom Cantoneros talked to the night he was shot.

The surfacing of Peter the Rock may indicate public confidence in the new set of task force investigators.

"We hope other people [would] follow Peter's example, especially those who really witnessed the incident," Opilac said.

Police have not established the motive for the killing.

Who owns the gun?

"Klein lashed out at almost everybody, so we are exploring a lot of possibilities," said Director Vidal Querol, Western Mindanao police chief.

Adriatico earlier said "three influential men" were being considered possible suspects.

The ownership of the .45 cal. Remington pistol, which was recovered from Cantoneros, has yet to be established. Earlier, Adriatico had said Cantoneros was not a licensed gun holder.

Querol said tracing the owner of the gun could lead to vital information. *With a report from Christine O. Avendaño*

KIDS OF SLAIN JOURNALISTS

Groups launch scholarship program

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Kim Hinolan and Kint Christian Hector Ureta are growing up without their fathers. Kim is 10 and Kint 7.

Kim's father, Herson "Bombo Boy" Hinolan, was gunned down in November last year near a carnival in Aklan's capital town of Kalibo.

Three years earlier, Kint's father, Rolando Ureta, was shot dead in Lezo town, 7 km west of Kalibo.

The two boys are among more than 100 children of journalists whose lives have been shattered after their father or mother was murdered.

Most of the 67 journalists killed since 1986 were the breadwinners of their families.

To ease the families' burdens, a P5-million scholarship program for children of murdered journalists has been launched by the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP), the Bevey Mabey Foundation (BMF) and the Kasangga at Gabay Foundation.

A memorandum of agreement calls for the BMF and Kasangga to provide P1 million a year for the program for the next five years. The NUJP will ensure the implementation of the scholarships.

Qualified applicants will be provided a subsidy, equivalent to public school rates, to cover tuition and other fees for the elementary, high school and college levels.

Grantees will also get monthly allowances.

Alvin Cabatit, executive director of Kasangga, said helping the children of slain journalists should be given prompt attention by the government and the private sector.

"Helping [them] is a step that we, in the private sector, have taken [not] only for the oppressed families of murdered journalists but for the betterment of our community and society," said Cabatit.

Bong to donate ₱200,000 talent fee to informants

By Norman Bordadora

HERE'S something good about having comedians in the Senate.

Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. yesterday said he was willing to give his entire talent fee from playing the lead in a weekend situation comedy for any information that may lead to the arrest of killers of journalists in the country.

Revilla's talent fee as a venerable barangay leader in the Saturday night sitcom "Idol Ko Si Kap" is not something to scoff at. It amounts to P200,000 per episode.

Revilla is chair of the Senate committee on mass media and information, which is to conduct next week hearings on attacks on journalists.

Revilla said he favored arming journalists if it would help protect them from assassins.

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Ex-CHEd chair slams Palace, Congress

From page A1

would address the basic problem of most colleges today—the lack of finances.

Puno had been CHEd commissioner since 2001 and had worked with the private sector and foreign schools to upgrade the facilities in the country's universities and colleges.

Political intervention

De la Rosa is a member of the Order of Preachers (O.P.) whose members are commonly known as Dominicans (after the founder's name, St. Dominic), one of the Roman Catholic Church's greatest religious orders, particularly noted for its influential theologians, philosophers, missionaries and preachers. The order has supplied theologians to the papal household in the Vatican and runs well-regarded schools in 102 countries.

De la Rosa disclosed his experiences and frustration during his short stint at CHEd. He told the INQUIRER that there was very little chance for him to effect any significant change in the commission because of the "excessive political intervention" in the decision-making process in CHEd.

Shortly after his appointment as CHEd chair, De la Rosa launched a campaign against "fly-by-night" schools and other schools with low passing rates in the professional board exams, specifically for nursing.

CHEd had issued a "cease-and-desist" order against these schools, ordering them to stop offering courses without the necessary permits from CHEd.

However, the schools did not follow CHEd's orders.

Higher penalties

The commission also asked Congress for more powers so they could slap higher penalties on errant schools.

De la Rosa said the maximum penalty they could impose was P10,000. Most schools who were penalized would pay the penalty and continued offering the courses.

He explained that some congressmen had been pressuring the CHEd to relax the standards on nursing education and lift its order closing down several nursing schools that had failed to comply with CHEd requirements.

De la Rosa said the nursing school of the AMA computer school had produced a Malacañang order, asking the commission to explain its decision to close the school.

"In effect, Malacañang issued a stay order," he said. "And the burden of proof was placed on CHEd, rather than on the school."

Reform education

But De la Rosa said Malacañang and Congress seemed oblivious to the need to reform nursing education.

"The President called up one day, saying she's 100 percent behind me in my drive against substandard schools and schools that don't comply with the CHEd requirements," he said. "But I suspect there are people in Malacañang who are acting without the President's knowledge."

De la Rosa explained that the nursing schools were ordered closed because they could not comply with the requirement for a base tertiary hospital (with at least 100 beds) where students could have "hands-on" training.

He said the training was crucial to producing quality nurses since "obviously the art and science of learning cannot be learned from computers alone."

Too many nursing schools

De la Rosa added it was statistically impossible for all the nursing schools in the country (368 to date) to be affiliated with tertiary hospitals since there are only around 300 DOH-accredited tertiary public hospitals in the country.

"Let us say you have 200 students per school, multiply this number by 368. How can the total number be trained properly when they have to compete for every patient available?" he asked.

He said the high number of nursing schools—many of them had been set up in the last years to cash in on the high demand for Filipino nurses abroad—was destroying the reputation of the Philippines as a producer of world-class nurses.

De la Rosa said the woeful quality of nursing education was evident in the decline of the national passing rate in the nursing board examination—from around 80 percent 10 years ago to 49 percent today.

The Dominican priest added that a fourth of nursing schools could barely manage a 30-percent passing rate.

He complained that some nursing schools heavily advertised and gave the impression that their graduates were assured of jobs abroad. He said the claim was often baseless since hospitals abroad maintained a list of accredited schools where they source nurses.

Reform higher education

He said the CHEd campaign for quality nursing education had received the support of the Association of Deans of Philippine Colleges of Nursing, National League of Nursing Service Administrators of the Philippines, Philippine Nurses Association and the Board of Nursing Education.

He added that the move was even praised abroad.

De la Rosa said the President had creative ideas about reforming higher education, such as the "ladderization" of all curricular offerings in colleges and universities, the English proficiency drive, the normative financing of state colleges and universities, and the aggressive program to produce masteral and doctoral degree holders in electronics.

"I believe she wants to improve higher education, but some people under her are undermining her best intentions," the Dominican said.

"The sad thing is, I was never given any chance by the President to talk about how politics play a crucial role in CHEd," he said.

Extremely busy

De la Rosa tendered his resignation on April 4 through the Office of the Executive Secretary. He said he would have wanted to personally hand in his resignation letter to the President, but her appointment secretary never gave him an audience with the President since he assumed the chairmanship on Oct. 18, 2004.

"I was told she was extremely busy," he lamented.

De la Rosa said he was informed that his resignation would become effective the moment the President issued him a "thank you" letter and the appointment of the next chairman is released. To date, he has yet to receive the letter.

Impressive credentials

De la Rosa's appointment to CHEd in October last year was welcomed warmly in higher education circles where he was known to be a respected scholar and an effective educational manager.

Before he became CHEd chair, De la Rosa had been rector and president of the University of Santo Tomas and the Colegio de San Juan de Letran in Calamba, Laguna, as well as president of national organizations of colleges and universities.

De la Rosa studied at the Dominican House of Studies in Quezon City and UST. He has doctorates in higher religious studies and sacred theology from the Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium.

His articles on theology, hermeneutics and history have been published in international journals. He maintains a column in one newspaper. His book, "Beginning of the Filipino Dominicans," won the National Book Award for history in 1991.

Achievements

In his letter of resignation, De la Rosa told the President that during his incumbency, he:

- Donated his monthly salary to the CHEd employees as initial seed money for their Provident Fund.
- Introduced reforms in the operations of CHEd, but whose implementation was hampered by bureaucratic snags and political intervention.
- Held several consultative assemblies in the different regions to make CHEd more responsive to the needs of higher education stakeholders in accordance with the President's 10-point agenda.
- Unearthed administrative and financial anomalies within CHEd which are now under investigation. *With a report from Alcuin Papa (Tomorrow: How politics patronage hampers higher education reforms)*

Retired bishop says . . .

From page A1

Rizal, had asked to meet with him. He granted Estrada's request and visited him a couple of months ago.

The deposed leader spoke mainly about his "unconstitutional" ouster, the bishop said.

A group of "young military officers" had also met with him, Labayen confided. "I told them that I am not joining partisan politics."

A few days ago, a neophyte opposition senator took the bishop for a ride aboard a private aircraft to visit a village in the Visayas.

"Beware of politicians," a group of former church social action workers reminded the bishop over afternoon snacks of *lumpia* (spring roll), rice cake and mangoes on Sunday.

"Don't worry," Labayen assured them. He also blessed each one of them.

Labayen, retired bishop of Infanta Prelature and member of the Order of Discalced Carmelites, has been known for his uncompromising stance against the Marcos dictatorship. He served as chair of the militant National Secretariat for Social Action of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

"There is a perception that the President does not listen," Labayen said during the informal get-together.

He meets regularly with this ideologically non-aligned group for prayer, reflection and camaraderie. Puzzled by the bishop's latest move, the veteran militants asked Labayen to explain.

Priestly and prophetic

He was not for the President's ouster, Labayen explained, but he had a "priestly and prophetic" role to exercise, that is, to call attention to the plight of the poor made worse by economic policies that serve foreign interests.

Two other bishops—Deogracias Yniquez of Kalookan and Antonio Tobias of Novaliches—have openly joined Labayen and the KME's anti-Arroyo attack while five bishops who weighed in sought anonymity. The CBCP had said these bishops were on their own and were not speaking for the entire conference.

The KME statement, titled "The Time for Change is Now," enumerated the political and economic changes needed to ease the burden of poor Filipinos.

The KME press conference almost coincided with the assembly that sought Ms Arroyo's ouster. During that assembly "for national salvation," retired Brig. Gen. Fortunato Abat, who favors Ms Arroyo's replacement by a revolutionary council, walked out because of disagreements over Labor Day plans.

Perceptions

Just the same, the seven bishops' anti-Arroyo statements were interpreted as a clamor for the President's ouster and a catalyst for a groundswell. The bishops were perceived to unwittingly have played into the hands of those in favor of authoritarian rule.

"That is how it looked," Labayen's friends told him.

Labayen, who will be in Venezuela for a week starting May 15, said he was eager to meet with the President.

"I want her to be aware that the poor are hungry and at the end of their rope, that politicians are waiting in the wings, that it would be hard to rule out a coup d'etat and that the church will not play hanky-panky," he said.

Labayen said he would be ready to present the people's just demands.

Only P5.5M for sidewalk . . .

From page A1

cost P6.2 million and replacement of the covered shades, P13.5 million.

To Abu's aid

Amid criticisms about the perceived extravagance of the project, Malacañang yesterday came to the aid of the AFP, saying its officials should be given a chance to explain its side.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said there was no need for Malacañang to tell the AFP what to do about the controversy.

"They know what needs to be done," Bunye said. "The correct response is for the AFP to come up with figures."

"Let's allow the AFP to explain what the project is all about," he said.

Asked whether the AFP was covered by the austerity directive of President Macapagal-Arroyo, Bunye replied in the affirmative.

Figures speak

The sidewalk renovation was Abu's brainchild, Pascual said.

Documents put the original project cost at P19.7 million.

A February memo from Austria broke the amount down into: P6,241,264 for the sidewalk and P13,551,000 for the covered walk.

In March, AFP chief engineer Maj. Gen. Eduardo Lena lowered the total estimate by P6 million.

By Lena's estimates, the entire project would cost P13,635,235—P5,567,235 for the sidewalk and P8,068,000 for the covered walk.

That same month, AFP Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics Maj. Gen. Antonio Anciano recommended the project based on Lena's estimate.

Aesthetic endeavor

The breakdown for the sidewalk renovation cost alone is material cost, P4,572,930; labor cost, P588,502; spare parts, P78,278; petroleum, oil and lubricant, P96,280; and contingencies, 266,799.

Abu on Jan. 13 initially released P5 million for the sidewalks upgrade.

In April, he approved the total project cost and ordered the release of the balance of P567,235 for the sidewalks phase.

THE CONTROVERSIAL sidewalk inside Camp Aguinaldo. VAL HANDUMON

Vice Chief of Staff Vice Admiral Ariston Delos Reyes had opposed the project, saying such aesthetic endeavor "may not be in keeping with the times."

Rice is different matter

Pascual said employees and all those doing at Camp Aguinaldo would benefit from the project.

"We have thousands of employees here, plus retirees, veterans and widows who are having a hard time walking on the sidewalks since they're already cracked and get flooded when it rains," Pascual said, showing reporters a finished part of the sidewalk near Gate 1.

Regarding criticisms that the AFP had set aside money for renovation but had not released rice allowances for soldiers in Mindanao, Pascual said: "The rice subsidy of soldiers assigned in Mindanao is unrelated to the repair of facilities at AFP camps."

Wading into the controversy, House Minority Leader Francis Escudero urged Abu to obey the President's austerity directive.

"It's clear that General Abu does not follow the order of his Commander in Chief against lavish spending or the waste of government money."

"Isn't that wasting money— spending that large amount just so our AFP officials would not walk on concrete but on tiles?" Escudero asked.

He said Congress would investigate the controversial project and submit its findings to the Office of the Ombudsman for proper action.

Akbayan party-list Rep. Etta Rosales found it ironic that military generals would suddenly care about "sidewalk decoration."

Rosales said the project reminded her of the flowerpots that former first lady Imelda Marcos put up along the sidewalks of Metro Manila.

"She did that in order to cover up for the crisis in governance that the Marcos regime was actually encountering when it declared martial law," said Rosales. *With reports from Philip C. Tubeza and Michael Lim Ubac*

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Drivers renewing licenses . . .

From page A1

drivers know how to drive and understand traffic rules and regulations before it renews their license.

"We want the drivers, especially those of public utility vehicles (PUVs), to undergo a test or seminar before renewing their license. We want to ensure that they have not forgotten traffic rules," LTO Assistant Secretary Anneli Lontoc said during a forum at the Manila Hotel yesterday.

Lontoc said she received a lot of letters and e-mails complaining about "abusive" public utility drivers.

The move would also correct an old problem involving motorists who were issued licenses through fixers or through friends or relatives working in the LTO, although they do not know how to drive.

"If they had been issued a license but they don't know how to drive, when they renew their license, we can use the test to check their driving proficiency. If they don't pass, then we won't renew the license," she said.

Lontoc said she had been meeting with the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), the Automotive Association of the Philippines and the Safety Organization of the Philippines about the project.

Earlier, LTFRB Chair Elena Bautista had voiced a similar plan. She said she wanted PUV drivers to take a driving test to make sure only those who are competent would be allowed to go behind the wheel.

One of the new features of the plan is to take the test using the vehicle that the individual is going to drive.

Bautista explained that motorists had taken the practical driving test using a sedan, although not everyone would be driving a sedan. Some would be driving jeeps or trucks. Thus, the test did accurately measure the motorist's driving proficiency.

She added that PUV drivers who failed the test would be put on a blacklist, which would prevent them from getting hired.

"A driver who fails the exam would have to take it again and again until he passes," she said.

'JUETENG' ROW

Just say no, bishop tells GMA

By Christian V. Esguerra and Norman Bordadora

JUST say no—and "jueteng" would be wiped out.

This is what President Macapagal-Arroyo simply needs to do to finally eradicate the illegal numbers game and, at the same time, spare her family from any suspicion of wrongdoing, Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz said yesterday.

"If the President would officially and directly say no to jueteng, stop jueteng, away with jueteng, then it's over," Cruz said in a statement.

There is no need for task forces to go after suspected jueteng operators or policies that call for an official's relief if he performs badly in the campaign, the outspoken bishop said.

So far, Malacañang's statements have been limited to maintaining that the Arroyo administration continues to hew to its policy against the illegal numbers game.

The Philippine National Police has once again ordered an anti-jueteng campaign in response to Cruz's exposé.

The bishop had furnished Congress with a list of suspected jueteng operators, purportedly including a Cabinet official, a top PNP officer, five governors, a vice governor and a mayor.

An INQUIRER report had tagged three relatives of a top government official, identified only as M1, M2 and JS7, as recipients of jueteng payola.

First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, his son Mikey, a Pampanga representative, and brother Negros Rep. Ignacio Arroyo have vehemently denied involvement in jueteng.

By once and for all eliminating jueteng, the President would not only be driving gambling lords out of business, Cruz said, [but] "those close to her would be above suspicion of being jueteng beneficiaries."

At the Senate, Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. yesterday asked Sen. Lito Lapid, chair of the Senate committee on games and amusement, to invite "Mr. X" and "Mr. Y" to the Senate investigation on the resurgence of jueteng.

"These are people who are very close to the jueteng operators. That's the reason they're very apprehensive about coming out," Pimentel told reporters.

Pimentel also asked Lapid to invite Tiwi, Albay, Vice Mayor Ruth Corral to testify against the jueteng lords in her area.

"I suggest that you invite [all three] to give their testimonies after the [alleged jueteng operators] shall have given theirs," Pimentel said.

In his letter to Lapid, Pimentel urged him to invite alleged jueteng operators Romy Lajara of Agoo, La Union; Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda of Lubao, Pampanga; Melchor "Nonoy" Calauag of the City of San Fernando; Rosario "Charing" Magbuhos of San Pablo City, and Gener "Boy Tangkad" David of Quezon City.

For his part, Lapid said his committee would invite Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes, PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao and Archbishop Cruz to a hearing slated for Wednesday next week.

Sr. Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, PNP spokesperson, said Lomibao and the other police officials were prepared for the Senate inquiry.

"He [Lomibao] will give his inputs and suggestions," Bataoil said.

Lomibao has consistently avoided answering whether he preferred that jueteng be legalized or not, saying the matter was not for him to decide. *With Luige A. del Puerto*

GSIS says it saved ₱1B in '04

THE GOVERNMENT Service Insurance System yesterday reported that it generated ₱1.085 billion in savings from its administrative and operating expenses last year.

Data released by the state pension fund showed that the GSIS approved a total budget of P5.983 billion for its administrative and operating expenses in 2004 but actual expenditures reached only P4.898 billion.

GSIS President and General Manager Winston F. Garcia said the savings were proof of the GSIS's support for President Macapagal-Arroyo's call for austerity in government expenditures to cope with the then fiscal crisis.

The GSIS savings came after Garcia ordered the compulsory cut of 20 percent on all controllable expenses and 10 percent reduction in all non-controllable expenses starting September last year.

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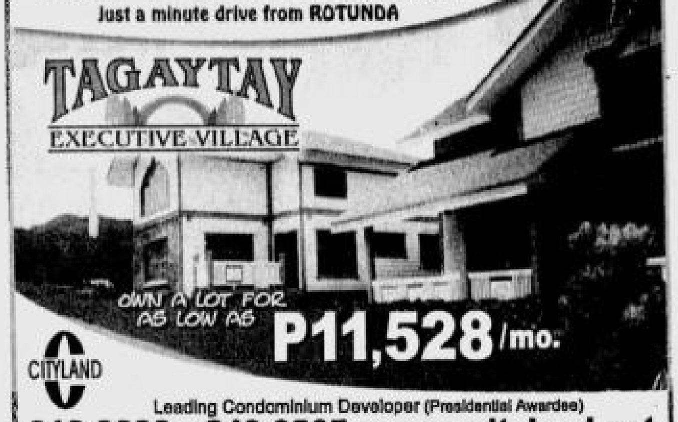

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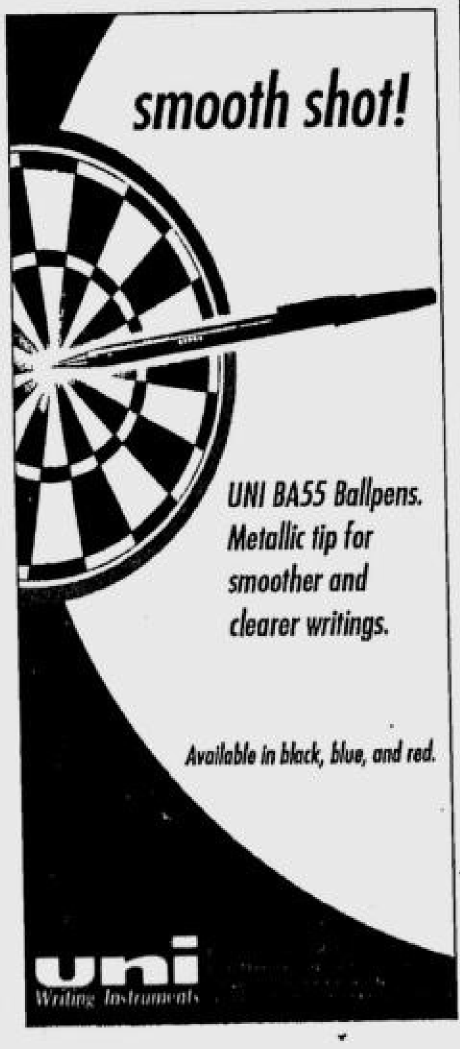

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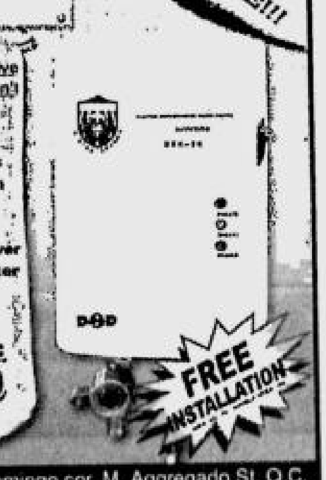

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueço

Leaders mark 60th year of WWII's end

MOSCOW—World leaders gathered Monday in Moscow for a dramatic Red Square parade celebrating victory against Nazi Germany in World War II, amid East-West differences over the Soviet Union's post-war occupation of Europe.

More than 50 heads of state and government joined Russian President Vladimir Putin in front of Lenin's marble mausoleum to watch the grandiose commemoration the 60th anniversary of Allied victory.

FRIENDS, foes no more—Leaders of four of the major WW II powers (left to right), Japan PM Koizumi, German Chancellor Schroeder, Russia President Putin and US President Bush greet each other at the Kremlin after attending WW II commemoration rites in Red Square May 9. REUTERS

Red Army flags fluttered in a light breeze and martial music rang out as Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov rode a vintage Soviet convertible car on an inspection of the 8,000 serving soldiers and bemedalled veterans massed under the Kremlin walls.

Impeccably turned-out troops passed on foot, horseback and in columns of World War II-style military lorries.

Even the weather had been prepared, thanks to air force planes seeding special chemical agents to disperse heavy rain clouds over Moscow just minutes before the ceremony.

A fly-by of fighter jets and a choral rendition of Soviet victory songs closed the parade.

In a brief opening speech, Putin sought to set aside differences on the fate of eastern Europe under Soviet rule after the war, recalling the Allies' joint struggle and stressing there must never be "a repeat of a cold war."

He also pointed to German-Russian reconciliation as "one of the most important post-war accomplishments."

US President George W. Bush, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan and Chinese President Hu Jintao were among the leaders and other international dignitaries in Russia for the events, which took place amid massive security efforts.

PICTURE taken May 1, 1945 of a Soviet soldier saluting in Berlin after the capture of Nazi Germany. AFP

But while the official program centered on the Allied victory 60 years ago, the run-up to the celebration was marred by bitter debate over what happened in the subsequent decades until the Soviet breakup in 1991.

The Kremlin has been sparring with Poland and the three tiny Baltic states—all now members of Nato and the European Union—over their demand that Moscow apologize for the Soviet occupation that followed the Nazi retreat across eastern Europe.

And Bush said during a visit to the Latvian capital Riga on Saturday that the occupations were "one of the greatest wrongs in history."

On Sunday Poland's President Aleksander Kwasniewski urged Russians "not to fear the truth" of Stalin-era reprisals in Poland and elsewhere and of the Soviet Union's post-war rule over the Baltic states.

Putin tried to calm the debate, saying in his Red Square remarks that "there is no alternative to our brotherhood and friendship."

The Russian leader has been arguing that the Red Army's massive sacrifice during the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II shows the USSR was not an occupier, but a liberator.

New official figures that show the Soviet Union lost 26.6 million people in four years of savage fighting with Germany, far more than all other Allied countries combined.

"Our people did not just defend their own homeland—they liberated 11 European states," Putin said last week. *AFP*

UN agency: N. Korea could have 6 A-bombs

WASHINGTON—A UN atomic agency estimate that North Korea could have six nuclear weapons ratcheted up official Washington's worries that the Stalinist state may test a bomb as early as next month.

CNN television Sunday asked International Atomic Energy Agency chief Mohamed ElBaradei if North Korea had as many as six nuclear weapons.

"I think that would be close to our estimation," he said.

"We knew they had the plutonium that could be converted into five or six North Korea weapons.

"We know that they had the industrial infrastructure to weapo-nize this plutonium. We have read also that they have the delivery system."

ElBaradei's comments came two days after the New York Times reported that US officials familiar with satellite and intelligence data believed the Stalinist state was building a reviewing stand and filling in a tunnel, signs of a potential underground nuclear test.

US officials have been urging North Korea to rejoin China, Japan, Russia and South Korea to join the United States in so-called six-party talks, which have been stalled since June, when the North quit the talks, citing "hostile" US policy.

North Korea declared on Feb. 10 that it had developed nuclear weapons to defend itself from the United States.

However, the pace of events picked up this week, with press and IAEA reports on North Korea's nuclear weapons and delivery capabilities.

As recently as April 29, the Pentagon referred to North Korea's ability to arm a long-range missile with a nuclear warhead as "theoretical."

Since then, ElBaradei urged the international community to persuade North Korea to back off what could be an attempt to use the weapons as blackmail.

"I'm not sure they will gain anything by testing other than provoking every member of the international community and bring—and play a brinkmanship policy, which nobody will benefit," ElBaradei told CNN.

US Sen. Pat Roberts, chair of the Senate Intelligence Committee, urged North Korea to return to the six-party talks.

The threat of a nuclear test "is the only card they have to play," the Kansas senator told CNN. "I think basically that (North Korean leader) Kim Jong-Il believes this is his card to play to stay on the world stage to make demands." *AFP*

US forces mount offensive against Iraq rebs

BAGHDAD—US forces have launched an offensive against insurgents in western Iraq near the Syrian border, and about 75 militants were killed in the first 24 hours, the military said Monday.

It said the offensive, being conducted with US air support in a desert area of Anbar province north of the Euphrates River, was targeting a sanctuary for foreign insurgents and a smuggling route.

The brief US statement didn't say when the offensive by Marines, sailors and soldiers had begun, how many were included, or whether there had been any American casualties.

The Chicago Tribune reported Monday that more than 1,000 US troops supported by fighter jets and helicopter gunships had attacked villages in and around Obeidi, a city near the Euphrates River in western Iraq not far from the Syrian border, on Sunday.

The report, by a journalist embedded with the US forces, said the offensive "was seeking to uproot a persistent insurgency in an area that American intelligence indicated has become a haven for foreign fighters flowing in from Syria."

It said the offensive was expected to last for several days.

Recently, US troops appear to have stepped up their attacks on suspected insurgent strongholds, including some near the Syrian border, where foreign militants may be entering the country to attack coalition forces.

AN IRAQI injured in a suicide car bomb attack is treated at Baghdad's Yarmouk Hospital May 9. A suicide car bomb exploded at an Iraqi police checkpoint, killing three people and wounding eight, police said. REUTERS

For instance, on Sunday, coalition forces killed six insurgents and detained 54 suspects in raids targeting terror group al-Qaida in Iraq in Qaim, a city near Obeidi, the US military said.

Insurgent violence killed eight US service members in Iraq over the weekend, raising the death toll to more than 300 from a torrent of insurgent attacks in Iraq since April 28, when a new Iraqi Cabinet was approved by parliament with seven positions undecided.

At least 1,600 members of the US military have now died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count.

On Monday, a wave of attacks by insurgents, many of them targeting Iraqi security forces and civilians, continued in Baghdad.

A suicide car bomb killed three Iraqis, police said.

US forces also detained 13 suspected militants, including one who may have plotted an attempt to kill former Iraqi Prime Minister Ayad Allawi, the military said.

On Sunday, Iraq's Shiite-dominated parliament filled five of the Cabinet's seven vacancies, including four with Sunni Arab ministers. But one of the Sunnis rejected his post on the grounds of tokenism, and that tarnished the Shiite premier's bid to include the disaffected minority believed to be driving Iraq's deadly insurgency.

Monday's violence included a suicide car bomb in southern Baghdad that hit a checkpoint of two police vehicles at a busy intersection, said police Maj. Mousa Abdul Karim.

Police first said nine policemen and an Iraqi civilian had been killed. But when Karim fully examined the destruction, he reduced the death toll, saying two policemen and one civilian had been killed and six policemen and three civilians wounded.

The US military announced Monday that it had conducted several raids the previous day in and around Baghdad, detaining 13 suspected insurgents, some armed with rocket propelled grenades.

Two of the suspects were captured in a raid aimed at capturing the leader of a terror cell believed to have plotted the attempt to kill Allawi on April 20, the military said.

Allawi narrowly escaped unhurt when a suicide car bomb exploded near a police checkpoint as his convoy drove him home. At least one policeman was killed and two were wounded, police said.

Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari, who was sworn in as Allawi's replacement last week, is still struggling to fill two vacant posts on his Cabinet: deputy prime minister and human rights minister. *AP*

Voices of the dead, or voices in your head?

By Sven Nordenstam

STOCKHOLM—Can voices of the dead be heard on ordinary audio tapes recorded in a quiet room?

Swedish archeologist, documentary maker and artist Friedrich Juergenson pioneered research into Electronic Voice Phenomena (EVP). Eighteen years after his death, interest in EVP is surging thanks to the horror movie "White Noise" in which Michael Keaton receives messages from his dead wife.

"We picked up maybe 60 new members after the movie," said Lisa Butler, who runs the American Association of Electronic Voice Phenomena (www.aaevp.com) together with her husband Tom from their home in Reno, Nevada.

Their homepage recorded 88,000 hits the day after the movie opened and the Butlers appear on the "White Noise" DVD's extra material, demonstrating how to record EVP.

The Butlers see the voices as evidence of life after death and say they have recorded the voices of Tom's father, Lisa's mother and her paternal grandmother.

"We have been recording the voices for 15 years and have proved to ourselves that it's possible to reach loved ones," said Lisa Butler. "We have done that."

Believers say getting in touch with a deceased relative through EVP can help the grieving process and the association's roughly 400 members include parents whose dead children have contacted them through EVP, said Lisa.

The voices cannot be heard live, only when a recording is played back. Messages are often short, such as "I miss you" or "I love you," and are usually just louder than a whisper. Anyone can record and hear them but not everyone manages to establish contact with lost family members, say the Butlers.

"There are always entities on the other side who are willing to talk to you. But getting a loved one, a specific person, is a little more of a challenge," said Tom.

"White Noise" dwells on the dangers of communing with the dead and the moviemakers say one in 12 EVP messages are "overtly threatening."

"That's pure science fiction," said Tom Butler.

Sceptics dismiss EVP as the by-product of stray radio waves or over-active human imagination. Even in the esoteric world of parapsychologists, the concept is frowned upon.

"I find the idea of EVP simply ludicrous. The human brain is designed to find meaningful patterns, even where there's only randomness. So it's not surprising some people believe they have heard something in the noise," said Joakim Westerlund, who does research into parapsychology at Stockholm University.

Undaunted by such comments and the occasional accusation from religious groups that they are dallying with demons, the Butlers recommend non-believers try out EVP for themselves.

"This is something that each and every person can do, and when you get a voice it's life-changing," said Lisa Butler.

Juergenson first heard strange voices while recording bird song in 1959. Recording silence and white noise from the radio, he identified one of the voices as his dead mother and concluded that all such voices must come from beyond the grave.

In a colorful career, the Swede who died in 1987 at the age of 84 conducted archaeological excavations at Pompeii and under St Peter's Basilica at the Vatican, spoke 10 languages and as an artist was commissioned to paint portraits of two popes. *Reuters*

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Party mates urge Blair to quit sooner than later

LONDON—Members of Tony Blair's Labor party called on Sunday for him to stand down sooner rather than later even after he won a record third term as British prime minister but his allies dismissed them as isolated mavericks.

Blair could have been forgiven for thinking he had lost Thursday's election as members of parliament from his center-left party used media interviews to urge a swift handover to heir apparent and finance minister Gordon Brown.

Blair, the first Labor leader to win three successive elections and once seen as his party's greatest asset, has insisted he plans to serve a full term of four or five years.

But with public trust in the prime minister battered by his unpopular decision to go to war in Iraq and other issues, some Labor members say he was a liability in the election campaign.

"Large numbers of people on the doorstep said that they wouldn't vote for Labor because of the war and very many of them went on to say they wouldn't vote Labor so long as Tony Blair remains leader of the Labor party," said Frank Dobson, a former health minister.

"That's a major consideration for any political party," Dobson told Sky television.

Labor won 356 parliamentary seats on Thursday, a decrease of 47 over the last election but enough for an absolute majority of 67 with one seat still outstanding. The main opposition Conservatives have 197 seats, a gain of 33.

BLAIR with son Leo on the doorstep of 10 Downing Street in London, May 6. REUTERS

Some Labor members said Blair should quit before the party's annual conference in the autumn. Others said he could wait until Britain finishes presiding over the Group of Eight leading nations and the European Union at the end of the year.

A third group has suggested he wait until after a referendum on the new EU constitution, a tough battle expected next year.

"The sooner we could have a reasonably smooth handover, the better," Ian Davidson, a Labor member of parliament for a constituency in Glasgow, told The Sunday Times.

The public calls so soon after the election are likely to be seen as a sign power is already ebbing away from Blair. But his supporters said many of those complaining were longtime critics who did not represent the mainstream.

"The problem is people have got used to us delivering landslides," Alastair Campbell, Labor's election strategist and a former spokesman for Blair, told BBC television.

"Some of the people that are quoted in the papers today, you could have got them to say 'Blair must go' any day of the week."

David Blunkett, a former interior minister who quit after his office fast tracked a visa application for his lover's nanny, issued a blunt call to Labor members of parliament to stop sniping and support Blair's government.

"If you don't want to be a Labor MP, you don't have to be a Labor MP but if you're going to be one, get stuck in, back us in delivering to the British people," said Blunkett, who was named employment minister in a post-election reshuffle.

"We have nearly 160 seats more than the Conservatives and yet people are going around as though we've actually lost." *Reuters*

Groping-free trains

TOKYO—Nine more major railway operators servicing the Tokyo region on Monday began running female-only carriages during morning rush hours to prevent rampant groping in the city's cramped trains.

The railways follow the Saikyo Line, which started female-only morning trains last month after becoming notorious for groping due to the relatively long distances between stations.

The nine additional lines were heeding a recommendation by the police, who urged female-only cars after recording a surge in groping cases.

"I want to use it because I don't want to be touched," a young woman commuting by train Monday morning told local television.

Some men had more mixed feelings.

"I believe it is a good thing," a businessman said of the new carriages. "I must point out, though, that for us carriages are still congested."

Other big cities in Japan such as Osaka have already introduced female-only cars during morning rush hour. But Tokyo presented more logistical problems due to its large number of lines, which carry a million people a day. *AFP*

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ISSN 0116-2642
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Vol. 20 No. 151

OPINION

Email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph website: http://www.inq7.net
Text us your feedback: inquirer opi name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

The Philippine Daily Inquirer, Inc. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.
•100% soy ink•

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Leading by example

EDITORIAL

LAST Friday Malacañang ordered a stop to the lavish spending of public funds and called for an accounting of how the funds were being used. "We must all set an example of honesty, discipline and frugality," President Macapagal-Arroyo said.

The President made a similar call last August. After admitting that the country was in the midst of a fiscal crisis, she called on everyone to make sacrifices, to practice austerity and to scrimp and save so that the nation could make both ends meet.

It was time the President issued a reminder, for going by reports in the media, very few in the government really minded her previous call for austerity and sacrifice. Officials of government agencies and corporations have been spending money as if it were going out of fashion. This, while the masses suffer from grinding poverty and deprivation. This is adding insult to injury, and recalls what Marie Antoinette said after being told that the people had no bread: "Let them eat cake."

Two recent examples show the insensitivity of government officials at a time when most people are groaning under the increasing burden of high prices, low salaries and wages and new taxes.

Rolando A. Golez, president and chief executive officer of the Coconut Industry Investment Fund, has admitted that he got a Nissan Patrol worth P2.2 million when he assumed his post and has spent P25,000 a week on fuel for two vehicles since then. He said he needed to gas up for trips to the provinces. Even in these days of high gasoline prices, P25,000 a week is certainly a lot. It would probably buy enough fuel to tour the whole of the Philippines. Does he do that every week?

CIIF employees said Golez spent P2 million for airfare for himself and his wife and at least P6 million on a trip to the United States and Europe. They also said he spent at least P960,000 in company funds to play golf at Wack Wack Golf and Country Club. He has admitted all these, but said they were part of his compensation package.

These may all be legal, but are they moral, especially at this time when millions of Filipinos are wallowing in poverty and want? And the worst part of it is that he is spending money of millions of poor coconut farmers. Haydee Yorac, former chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government, has said that the use of the coconut levy funds for Golez's perks was questionable. It's not only questionable, it's reprehensible.

Another case is the project of Gen. Efren Abu, Armed Forces chief of staff, to replace the sidewalks in Camp Aguinaldo with "decorative paving blocks" at a cost of P19.7 million. Soldiers and civilian personnel in the camp have asked how Abu could do that when soldiers in combat areas have not even received their rice allowances.

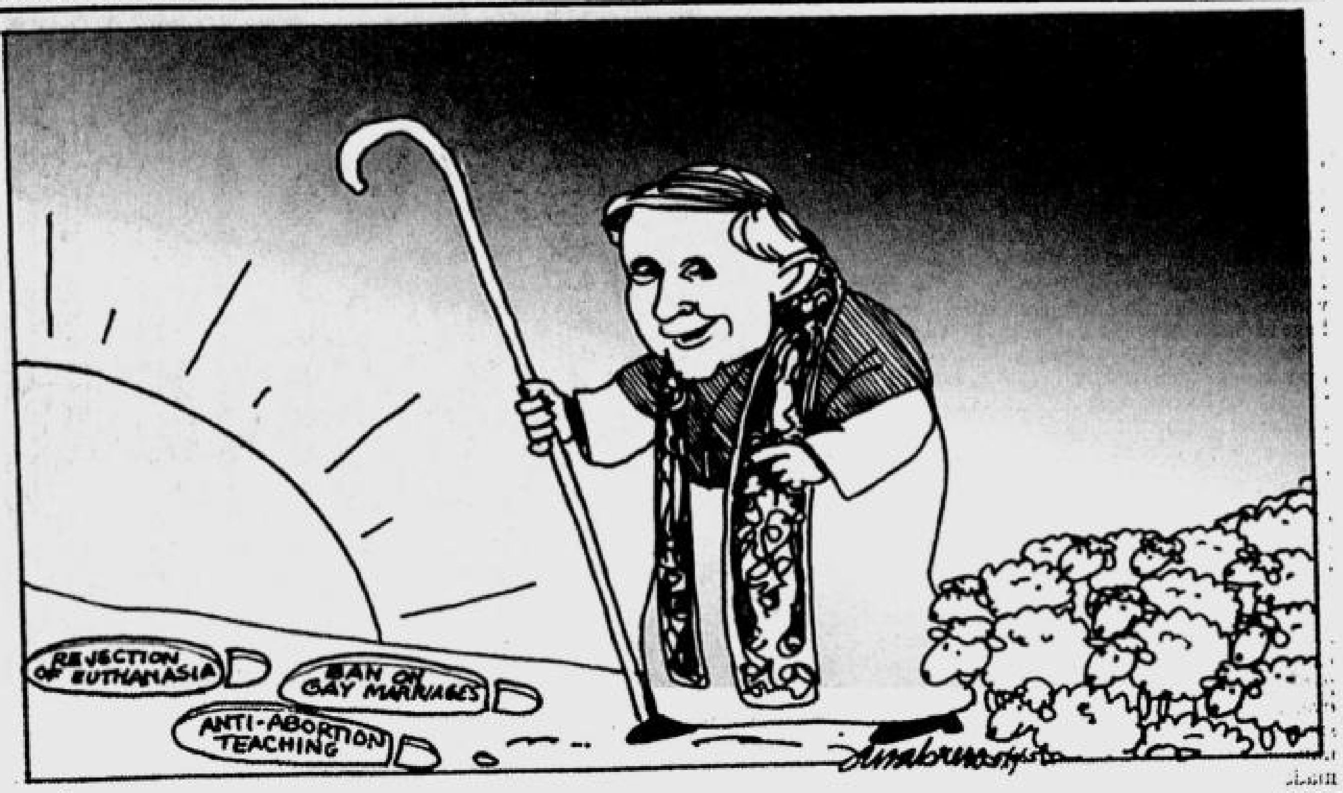
Lt. Gen. Edilberto Adan, AFP deputy chief of staff, defended the project, saying that Abu is in his post precisely to determine "what to prioritize." If this is so, then Abu must have the wrong priorities. Are sidewalks more important than food? No one will suffer much—probably just a little inconvenience—walking on broken-down sidewalks. But can you expect the soldiers in the front lines to fight properly on an empty stomach?

It's good that these recent cases of lavish or unwise spending of public funds were brought up for they should remind certain people about the administrative order issued by the President last August. She directed all public entities to adopt austerity measures such as the suspension of local and foreign travels, purchase of new vehicles, creation of new positions and parties and sports events.

Government officials have to be reminded again and again that they have to be very circumspect in spending public funds. These funds are not theirs but the people's. They were exacted in the form of taxes from a long-suffering people. They are just holding the funds in trust, and they have to spend them wisely and prudently.

It would help if the President and her family would set the example of frugality, voluntary simplicity and wise spending of public funds. How can you expect the people to undergo financial sacrifices when they read that the First Gentleman stayed in a $20,000-a-night suite in Las Vegas, even if it was complimentary?

The high officials of the land and their families have to set the example. They cannot call on the rank and file and the masses to practice austerity and at the same time spend public funds with reckless abandon. They have to lead by example.



Orphans and megaphones

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

"THERE are only two communists left in Europe today," Indonesian editor Sumono Mustoffa remarked following the communist movement's worldwide collapse. "Both are Filipinos."

Sumono was observing Jose Maria Sison and his geriatric comrades wage a "people's war" here by e-mail and fax from the Netherlands. In Sumono's tally, Luis Jalandoni was Filipino, although he is a naturalized Dutch citizen.

"By 2010, the aging Hague cabal will be a dimly remembered threat," predicted the Cebu Daily News editorial on Jan. 5, 2000. Georgia and Ukraine had not yet staged their Rose and Orange People Power revolts then.

"Age, distance and comfortable bourgeois exile sapped the capacity (of the Utrecht commissars) to wage a people's war," the CDN editorial said. "Communism's collapse left them ideological orphans."

Today, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) bitterly assails the People's Republic of China. It flays Beijing for "abandoning armed struggles in Southeast Asia in exchange for China's accommodation by Washington into the world's capitalist system," the INQUIRER reported

"Philippine communist leaders, most of whom are living in exile in Western Europe, feel hurt and orphaned" the account added. The Reds pledged continued rebellion.

Gun smuggling from Beijing, the Reds then insisted, was "liberation." Now, Manila accepts military assistance from Beijing, aside from traditional US and Nato sources. Is that "intervention"?

Talking from both sides of the mouth is characteristic, the syndicated Sun-Star newspapers noted Sunday. "(They) were orphaned earlier by People Power One. The country revolted against the Marcos dictatorship without them. Now, they've been orphaned again by China's turning capitalist."

But history has moved on rapidly. And it recast radically those who govern the Middle Kingdom. But Sison and his comrades are locked in a time warp.

From a China ruled then by Mao and Long March survivors, they smuggled weapons. "The East Wind will prevail over the West wind," communists parroted from the notorious "Gang of Four's" approved opera.

But that was four "generations" ago.

"The men who launched the market reform process in the 1970s were the second," notes Foreign Affairs. "The third generation came of age during the chaos of the Cultural Revolution and then managed two decades."

"To get rich is glorious" was Deng Xiaoping's pragmatic slogan which he proclaimed as he buried Maoist governance.

"Leaders of the fourth generation will have spent their careers observing a liberalizing economy," Forign Affairs adds.

That includes President Hu Jintao. Hu stressed in Manila a policy that would ensure China's growth from a "soft power," no longer by export of revolution as Filipino Reds want, into a full-fledged member in a globalizing economy.

Hu's successors will take office from 2010 to 2015. They'll be even better versed in market economics and widely exposed to the world, the analysis foresees. "The direct inheritors of the mantle of Mao Zedong, in effect say: 'We had it all wrong, comrades,'" Graphic noted in an article entitled, "How Now, Brown Maos?"

The CCP is "isolated," noted an INQUIRER editorial. "Yet, Filipino communists refuse to consider the obvious. Have they failed to adapt to the times and, thus, condemned themselves to the rubbish bin of history?"

Well, not quite. Communists here hope to claw their way out of the "rubbish bin." They will exploit repeated failures of successive administrations to institute radical reforms to address festering social injustices and economic disparities.

They have more than enough to work on.

"Anak ng jueteng" in today's regime is a continuation of "jingle bells" in the previous administration. The obscene dissipation of levy funds by Rolando Golez of the Coconut Industry Investment Fund is an extension of Eduardo Cojuangco's wringing coconut farmers dry. Marcos' suppression of the press persists in the impunity killers of journalists enjoy.

The Filipino elite has always dug its heels against radical reforms. Our "democratic structures" would be ripped apart by a rebellion of the rich, the Jesuit sociologist John Carroll once said, if government ever kept its promises.

"Those who make reforms impossible," John F. Kennedy warned, "make revolution inevitable."

Communists here never mustered enough warm bodies for their failed creed. But they've expanded their network of multiple fronts—for women, workers, OFWs, even psuedo-religious groups. "The only elements missing are National Democratic Fronts among the military and the police," the Free Press' Antonio Abaya notes.

Fronts piggy-back on legitimate grievances, from the coco levy, rising fuel costs and on credible figures. In May 2000, for example, Cardinal Ricardo Vidal objected when Bayan and Kilusang Mayo Uno twisted his statement by splicing on their policy demands.

"These fronts acted on a tenet of their obsolete creed: that the end justifies the means," Cebu Daily News noted in its Aug. 9, 2000 editorial. "The cardinal's word is good with the people. Not so Bayan. Or Kilusang Mayo Uno."

"So after over 35 years of trying to overthrow the government, what does the New People's Army have to show for it?" INQUIRER's editorial asked. "Rejection from those who once inspired them is what."

But continued lip service to reforms, in a business-as-usual government, will hand victory to the orphans who're reaching for every megaphone within reach.

The outrage

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THESE are the Filipino journalists who have been murdered since 2000:

Olimpio Jalapit Jr., dxPR Radio, Nov. 17, 2000, Pagadian City; Roland Ureta, dyKR Radio, Jan. 3, 2001, Aklan; Candelario Cayona, dxLL Radio, May 30, 2001, Zamboanga; Edgar Damalerio, Zamboanga Scribe and dxKP Radio, May 13, 2002, Pagadian City; Noel Villarante, dzJV Radio and Laguna Score, Aug. 19, 2003, Santa Cruz, Laguna; Rico Ramirez, dxSF Radio, Aug. 20, 2003, Agusan del Sur; Sonny Alcantara, Quo Vadis San Pablo and Kokus, Aug. 22, 2002, San Pablo City; Apolinario Pobeda, dwTI-AM Radio, May 17, 2003, Lucena City; Bonifacio Gregorio, Dyaryo Banat, July 8, 2003, La Paz, Tarlac; Jun Pala, dxGO Radio, Sept. 6, 2003, Davao; Rowell Endrinal, dzRC, Feb. 11, 2004, Legazpi; Elpidio Binoya, Radyo Natin, June 17, 2004, General Santos City; Roger Mariano, Radyo Natin-Aksyon Radyo, July 31, 2004, Laoag City; Arnel Manalo, Bulgar and dzRH Radio, Aug. 5, 2004, Bauan, Batangas; Romy Binungcal, Remate and Bulgar, Sept. 29, 2004, Bataan; Eldy Sablas, dxJR-FM Radio, Oct. 19, 2004, Tandag, Surigao del Sur; Gene Boyd Lumawag, MindaNews, Nov. 12, 2004, Jolo.

What do they have in common?

I posed that question to the group I spoke to in Naga City last Friday, which consisted of media practitioners, university people, public officials, students and church workers. They answered variously: They were from Mindanao, they were from radio, and they were vociferous commentators. I said that was true only in part: Not all of them came from Mindanao, not all of them worked with radio, and not all of them mouthed angry vituperations. What they had in common was simply this: **None** of them came from Metro Manila. **None** of them worked with the "national media."

That is a point that must be repeated again and again. The correct formulation is not that the Philippines has become the most dangerous place in the world for journalists, it is that the Philippines has become the most dangerous place in the world for local (as against national) journalists. If the recent rash of killings should really do anything, it should be to draw attention not to the plight of Filipino journalists in general but to that of local journalists in particular.

Someone suggested to me why murders of journalists take place routinely in the province. These are small towns, he said, everyone knows everyone. Criticisms, insults or diatribes are taken personally, and thus invite equally personal retributions. What compounds the problem, he said, is that the reporters and commentators do not always zero in on their targets for the noblest motives. They often do so from partisan ones: They work for certain politicians or private interests.

I sympathize with this. I've written several columns in the past wondering how it must be to report or comment in a place where people are relatives of relatives, in-laws of in-laws, or friends or friends. I, myself, writing as I do in a megalopolis of 10 million souls, who may be presumed to have reached staggering levels of impersonalism, continue to get bitter complaints from officials in the nature of, "What have I done to **you**?" This is a country steeped in interpersonal relations, and values public, or more accurately tribal, acceptance. This is a society where people are eager to please, one's standing in the community depending on the extent to which one is able to do so. The concept of reporting as best as one can or criticizing for no other reason than public interest, which are cardinal tenets of media, tends to be lost in the blaze of this. If it can happen in Metro Manila it most assuredly can—and does—happen outside of it.

None of this, however, justifies or mitigates the obscenity of local journalists being murdered right and left. I say this because I was also astounded by the resignation of some of my audience to the killings, their question now being: What may journalists do to escape the fate? That was a wrong question, I said. The one and only task of journalists is to be journalists. It is to be true to their calling. It is the task of government to make sure they are kept alive, not least by making sure the people who do them harm, or threaten them with harm, are swiftly brought to the dock. That is what we pay taxes for, so we may get basic services, not least in the form of a free press.

Whether journalists report or comment from the noblest motives or the basest ones may not be the basis for whether they live or die. I did not particularly like Jun Pala, the rabble-rousing leader of Alsa Masa and exponent of vigilante justice, but I condemn his killing and demand justice for him as much as for the others. You do not fight a bad idea with murder, you fight a bad idea with a good idea. The day we make exceptions and say some of the victims deserved to die because we did not like them or what they said is the day we put a bullet in the head of press freedom.

The fact that the journalists being murdered belong to the local media and not the national one may not make us apathetic, it may only make us more strident. My admiration for local journalists who do their jobs conscientiously is boundless for the simple reason that it is infinitely harder for them to do that than those of us in the national media. It is infinitely harder for them to be courageous amid the very real and obdurate threats to life and limb, and to be honest amid bad pay, the blandishment of the objects of reportage, and pressures from kin and friends not to antagonize their own. For them to be killed while doing their jobs—and many of the victims were doing so, absolutely conscientiously—there are no words to describe the outrage.

Never mind that it cries to heaven. Mind only that it raps violently at our consciences.

An incredibly beautiful place

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

CAPE TOWN—A report says that the British Broadcasting Corp. (BBC) has drawn up a list of the top 50 places on earth that one must visit in one's lifetime, and Cape Town ranks among the top five. And among the five, Cape Town is the only city, the others being natural wonders like the Grand Canyon in Arizona.

I can believe the BBC's recommendation about this port city in the western part of South Africa, which for three centuries has been the sea link between Europe and the East. It's an incredibly beautiful nature place, with mountains edging the sea, a lovely bay, miles and miles of white sand beaches. Small well-preserved towns that grew out of wineries are within an hour's drive from Cape Town. This morning, my son Buddy and I jogged along the boulevard and the waves of the Atlantic were breaking out into huge white cascades as they hit the boulders.

Yet Cape Town is very cosmopolitan and bears more vestiges of British colonial rule than Johannesburg and Pretoria, with its well-preserved colonial houses. For tourists and locals, it has fabulous restaurants offering international cuisine, good hotels and museums, sophisticated shopping areas and beautiful residential enclaves. Indeed, it is deemed the most urbane and civilized city of South Africa. And it has also some of the most varied flora and fauna in the Southern Hemisphere.

* * *

The main attraction is the Table Mountain, so called because its top is very flat as though it had been shaved and shaped by a giant carpenter. The mountain is not very high, rising over 3,500 feet above the city and visible to sailors from as far as 65 km away, but it looks immense because of its long flat top shape. It's made mainly of red siltstone and thick sandstone beds believed deposited some 450 million years ago, though the present mountain is believed to be only 10 to 15 million years old.

There are probably few cities in the world that is dominated by a mountain. In fact, Cape Town is said to have grown in the "afternoon shadow" of Table Mountain, known as the "grey father," and then spread all around its sides, its houses seemingly scampering up to the mountain's mid-rib. As one guidebook puts it, this mountain so dominates the city that "when creeping fingers of clouds spill over the mountain and reach toward the city, the whole town seems to shiver and hold its breath." In adds: "Depending on which side of the mountain you live on, it even dictates when the sun will rise and set."

* * *

South Africa thrives on so many legends, and not a few center around Table Mountain. Its grandeur and stateliness is best appreciated when it's cloudless, but the peripatetic summer clouds that blanket the top only adds to its majesty—and its lore. Capetonians refer to these clouds as the mountain's "tablecloth." Legend has it that a retired but successful buccaneer, Van Hunks, decided to settle in the Cape to enjoy his loot. His wife, "a great, fat vrou," was not only a slave-driver but a nagger as well who would not tolerate Hunks' pipe ashes on her fine yellowed floor. Hunks found refuge in a saddle connecting Table Mountain and Devil's Peak. During his sojourn, the Devil appeared, and Hunks promptly challenged him to a game of dice. The stakes were Hunks' money against credits for his soul. Shortly thereafter, St. Peter appeared and he was invited to gamble as well. Hunks treated his visitors from Above and Below to tobacco, providing extra pipes as well. They gambled and smoked, and the session lasted so long that the rising smoke covered the mountain top like a beautiful lace tablecloth. The three agreed to play every summer when the climate was more pleasant. And today, whenever clouds envelop the top, Capetonians say, "Table Mountain has spread its cloth for tea."

* * *

One morning we drove along the very windy coast southward from Cape Town and headed toward the Cape of Good Hope, which bills itself as "the most southwestern point of the African continent." As a geography student in the old Holy Ghost College, I had read how in olden times the ships sailing from the West would go around this storm-lashed, mountain-shadowed point as they headed East, and its violent currents became the watery grave of perhaps hundreds of ships. To seafarers, the Cape of Good Hope was famed for being the junction of two of the earth's contrasting water masses: the Atlantic with its cold Benguela Current, and the Indian Ocean with its warm Agulhas Current.

The Suez Canal's opening in 1869 cut short the route to the East, and today traffic around the Cape is very much reduced, but it's still a favorite tourist spot because of its history, legend and the vast reservation of flora and fauna.

* * *

Like many places in South Africa, the Cape of Good Hope is rich in legend. A Reader's Digest book on Southern Africa cites Luis Vaz de Camoes, the Portuguese poet, as claiming that the Cape with its howling winds is the home of the giant Adamastor, who was sent there by the gods of ancient Greece as punishment. The legend says, "His body turned 'to rocks all rough and strange' and formed the peninsula of the Cape, with the long mass at Table Mountain as his tomb. The peninsula was said to be Adamastor's workshop for storms, and he roams over the face of the southern seas, dressed in howling gales and dark storm clouds."

It has also been said that the Portuguese navigators encountered such terrible storms that from the disappearance of Bartholomeu Dias, the European discoverer of the Cape of Good Hope, was born the legend that composer Richard Wagner set to music in "The Flying Dutchman." The opera tells of a sea captain "who defied fate by swearing to round the Cape in the face of contrary winds and was condemned to be blown back for ever."

Doggie love

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

AT A seminar on entrepreneurship, my husband learned that one of most profitable and risk-free businesses a retiree could go into was raising purebred dogs.

He brightened up at the prospect because he was familiar with the business, having raised purebred poodles decades ago. In fact, it was the income he earned from the breeding business that saw him through college.

But something the speaker said dampened his enthusiasm: "To succeed in breeding, however, your spouse and family need to be behind you 100 percent." That made him scuttle his plans immediately, the hubby said, because he knew I wasn't exactly fond of dogs.

Well, for starters, I'm not exactly a connoisseur of dog smell. I remember sniffing the air suspiciously whenever I'd visit my then-boyfriend at his family home, which reeked of distinct, unmistakable Eau de Dog. Before our wedding, I made him promise to get rid of his poodles if he wanted me to move into his family home.

It wasn't just finicky olfactory nerves, mind. I was, and still am, deathly afraid of dogs, yes, even little yappy ones like poodles.

The phobia has its roots in an incident from childhood, when, wandering innocently into our neighbor's yard, my sister and I came face to face with a huge German Shepherd which managed to slip its leash and started to chase us all the way back to our house. Neither of us was bitten or hurt, but adding to the heart-pounding fear and hysteria was the whipping we got from our mother. Ever since, each encounter I've had with a dog has left me with a hair-raising fear that, so my husband scolds, the animals could actually smell. My cowering and, I'm ashamed to say, even squawking and yelping seem to provoke more aggressive behavior, with dogs escalating their barking or even rushing in front of me, provoking even more panicky reactions on my part. It isn't a pretty sight.

* * *

BUT even a certified dog-phobic like me couldn't help feeling all gooey inside upon catching sight of the photos of the doggone marchers in the first "Dog Walk for a Cause" last Sunday.

More than 7,000 dogs took part in the protest marches that took place at the Luneta and in 20 other locales across the country, news reports said. Organized by the Philippine Canine Club Inc., the dog march was meant to call attention to "widespread cruelty to dogs" in the country, as well as to raise funds for advocacy efforts against cruelty to animals.

The total number of canines joining the marches was supposed to have broken an international record, something which organizers said they hoped would change the image of the Philippines "from a dog-eating nation to a dog-loving nation."

The Pinoy fondness for pets—and not just dogs—has become increasingly visible and, as far as pet-food marketers are concerned, profitable as well. I used to edit a monthly magazine called "Parents" and once a year we would devote an issue exclusively to pets and their owners. Every year the "pet issue" would end up as our best-selling number, such that we decided to put out two issues a year, in addition to hiring a regular pet columnist. It wasn't just the readership support that counted, but the advertising support as well, from marketers of dog and cat food brands, as well as pet care products.

Our sensing of the readership potential of pets was later validated, as newspapers started creating regular sections on pet care and magazines began running regular features on celebrity pet owners. When a young entrepreneur launched a business selling pet accessories, I knew there was more to the pet market than was immediately obvious.

* * *

EVEN so, the local market of pet owners and advocates is puny compared to the same market in the United States.

For this my most ready reference is my sister Chona, who ironically was with me on that fateful run-in with the German Shepherd and thus shares my lifelong aversion to dogs. That is, until her daughter Cesi adopted a frisky Dalmatian by the name of Sera, whose dog's-view story of Cesi's wedding was published in this space last year.

While waiting for a human grandchild, my sister has decided instead to adopt Sera as her *apo-apohan* (pretend grandchild), coddling the "polka-dot dog" (as my cousin's helper calls her) to distraction that her youngest son Alan has had to remind her: "Mom, she's just a dog!"

In Montreal where Cesi lives with her husband Rob, Sera goes to doggie day-care, sees a specialist in canine allergies apart from her regular visits to the vet, and has even been brought to a pet psychologist for treatment for her "depression."

Being a vegetarian, Sera is fed a special veggie doggie food mix and enjoys occasional treats like doggie ice cream. But my sister is not above breaking the rule that the dog is not to be fed from the dining table, surreptitiously slipping Sera bits of vegetables, potatoes and even an occasional bacon. Remarked an alarmed Rob to Cesi: "When we have children, I'm afraid they're going to be so overweight. Look at how much your mom feeds Sera!"

* * *

ON A recent Thanksgiving visit to her "grandma" in Virginia, Sera found a bag of chocolates in the basement and promptly tore into it. Hearing the dog scuffling at the front door early the next morning, Chona let Sera out the door and looked on with alarm as the dog started vomiting and shaking. After finding the wrecked bag of chocolates, they rushed Sera to the vet, since chocolates are "poison" to dogs.

When they got to the animal hospital, the vet wanted to know what brand of chocolates Sera had ingested. Told that the sweets were ordinary milk chocolate, the doctor visibly relaxed. If she had eaten better quality chocolate, he said, Sera might well have died. And that would have broken everyone's hearts.

The Chinese in us

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

THE PERCENTAGE of Filipinos with Chinese blood is probably higher than many of us imagine since relations between the Philippines and China date back to pre-colonial times. As early as the 7th century, a Chinese scholar mentioned the Philippines, although it appears to have been Arab traders traveling to India and Southeast Asia during the Tang Period who actually brought knowledge of the country to China.

The Chinese eventually supplanted these Arab voyagers, and in 982 mention of trade relations appear in Chinese annals. Sung Dynasty records note visits by Chinese traders to Luzon and Luzon traders to China as early as the 10th century. In the 13th century, some Luzon islanders visited the court of Emperor Yung Lo, bringing gifts and receiving silks and jewelry in return.

A Chinese chronicler described the trade between the two countries in the Manila Bay area. He wrote of a community along the banks of the Pasig and how the Chinese would anchor at the mouth of the river and unload goods on the shore. Filipinos apparently went for pottery, lead, glass beads (to judge from the *tiangge* at Greenhills, tastes haven't changed), cooking pans, iron needles and, of course, silk (this hasn't changed either). In exchange, we bartered pearls, shells, betel nuts, bees wax, cotton fabrics and mats.

In isn't difficult to conclude that some Chinese traders may have settled here long enough to start families since it would take eight or nine months for Filipino middle men to take the goods to the interior and to other islands and obtain other goods for barter. The junks thus had to delay their departure.

By the time of Magellan's arrival in Cebu, Pigafetta mentions that they learned of Chinese merchants coming to trade. Miguel Lopez de Legaspi also learned from the Cebuanos about the trade relations with China and his field marshal, Martin de Goiti, met Chinese traders off the coast of Mindoro.

When the Spaniards sailed into Manila Bay, there were 150 Chinese residents in Manila. The goods that the Chinese traded became the basis for the Galleon Trade, a lucrative business for the Spaniards for 300 years.

Aside from that, the Spaniards also found the Chinese useful as laborers and artisans, and it was not uncommon to hire them as cooks either. There were bakers, barbers, tailors, carpenters, gardeners, printers, jewelers and *panciteria* owners.

The first treaty of commerce with China was signed in 1574, three years after the founding of Manila. It allowed Chinese migration and trade.

At the height of the Galleon Trade, 30 to 50 Chinese junks would come to Manila. By the 19th century, what had started out as a history of traveling merchants (Sangleys) was now about bankers, financiers and exporters.

A noteworthy practice of the Chinese was their keeping two families. Many Chinese would return to their villages and marry a woman chosen by their parents, beget children and return to the Philippines. These children would join their father once they were in their teens. On the other hand, it was not uncommon for them to have a Filipina as second wife and beget what became known as the *Sangley mestizos*. This second family did not diminish their loyalty to China or to their first families. Apparently, many of them followed the custom of returning to their native land to die when they were older.

Because of the Sino-Japanese War, World War II and the communist victory in mainland China, the Chinese in the Philippines were cut off from their ancestral land. Children of these families no longer had any direct contact with their ancestral land even if they did receive a Chinese education.

Ironically, it was the Chinese *mestizos* born of Chinese fathers and Filipinas who were most biased against the Chinese migrants and their aggressive business tactics. They went as far as mounting anti-Chinese campaigns in the 1880s and looked down on the Chinese migrants. Although little has been written about it, the Chinese suffered at the hands of Filipino revolutionaries. Their properties were burned, robbed or confiscated although, to be fair, so were those of the Spaniards. They were squeezed for financial contributions and paid at least twice as much taxes as anyone else. In Bicol alone, Gen. Jose Paua (a.k.a. Hou A-Pou) collected P400,000 from Chinese abaca dealers.

It isn't surprising then to find the Chinese described as "low key" given their history. For sure, any number still pay "protection money" and are still the favorite target of kidnappers and extortionists. Yet they have played a key role economically, commercially and artistically. Some of the most beautiful images of ecclesiastical art were the products of Chinese artisans and the earliest book printed in the country was Chinese ("Keng Yong" or "Eng Kang").

You might wonder why I'm bringing this up, and it's simply because despite the Chinese being part and parcel of our lives for over a thousand years, whenever we speak of celebrations of customs and traditions, the Chinese are generally excluded. But how can there be a celebration of Filipino heritage without the Chinese contribution?

It is for this reason that for the second time since its inception in 2003, the Filipino Heritage Festival this May showcases Chinese cuisine, customs, traditions and goods at the Parian Gate of Intramuros from May 13 to 15. Come and remember your Chinese legacy as you enjoy the dragon dance, the fortune tellers, the landscape painters and calligraphers, the *dimsum* and *siomai*.

Baby virus

YOUNG BLOOD

Ching Jorge

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

FOR the past eight months, I've been having sleepless nights. I have had to eat and use the computer with just one arm free. My friends have stopped asking me to go out at night. I have had to cut six inches off my hair. I'm not used to wearing heels anymore. I have moved up one size. And yet, I am having the greatest time of my life!

Eight months ago, I gave birth to a beautiful baby girl and life has never been the same. All my experiences, good and bad, all my heartaches and joys brought me to that day, and I entered a new chapter in my life an entirely different person.

Before Natalia Louise came into my life, work and fun were my priority. Growing up in a society where work and socializing went hand in hand, and being the workaholic that I was, I couldn't have just one job at a time; I always had to have more. I would have two to three jobs at a time, and my schedule was filled up from 6 a.m. to midnight. Work was my life.

Socializing was another priority. Whatever free time I had was spent with my friends or going to parties or visiting the newest bars. There was never a moment when I had nothing to do and nowhere to go.

Then I found out that I was pregnant. From that moment, everything changed. Apart from undergoing physical, spiritual and emotional changes, I had to take a leave from work due to premature contractions.

Staying at home was a totally new experience. At one point, the doctor ordered bed rest and the farthest I was allowed to go was the bathroom.

But as always, I looked at the bright side of things. I considered my situation as a chance for me to reflect and look back and see where I was and where I wanted to go. It was time for true reflection and spending time with family. I had never thought the day would come when I would enjoy not working. I finally found the time that I never thought I had.

This period became a time of discovery for me—discovery of self, discovery of family, discovery of true friendship and discovery of the simple rules of life. I also discovered that I am truly blessed and that there is more of myself that I can give and share with others; that there is nothing more important than having a family, loving your family and keeping your family intact; that friendship is indeed tried and tested over time and that challenges bring out the best and worst in friends; and that a life of sincere selflessness is much more rewarding than several lifetimes of material achievements.

I learned so much in just nine months! What more if we were to give ourselves more time to reflect every day.

Aside from becoming a new mother, I was also going to be a single mom. I suppose I was a little too old to be irresponsible. But I was surprised by the comments I got during the course of my pregnancy and after. Of course, my mother's world was shattered when she found out I was pregnant, but society has either become liberated or some married women have been very unhappy and now I am told that I am lucky I don't have to worry about a husband. I do not want to glorify my situation, but accepting it and making the most of it are certainly working for me.

My ex-boyfriend acknowledges my daughter but does not want anything on paper for fear of lawsuits in the future. He is more than willing to "help out" on the condition that I ask him for help first and promise not to sue him. I guess that says a lot about his character and values, some of so many things you don't see when you are blinded by infatuation. Another lesson in life.

Giving birth was another thing. The roller coaster of emotions I went through during my pregnancy became a blimp after I gave birth to my baby girl. Experiencing the miracle of life is truly a life-altering experience. Not only did my daughter change my life overnight and turn me into a more secure, happier and contented person it also changed my family as well.

We call it the baby virus. Not only did she infect me with it when I was pregnant, giving me patience and hope and changing my perspective on life, but now that she's out, she is infecting everyone around her. Once weekly family get-togethers have become nightly events. Relatives whom we used to see only on special occasions have become regular visitors. My formerly anti-social, serious and undemonstrative father now dances and sings nursery rhymes and is first to discover my daughter's new tricks. My brother, who used to be so busy at work and to come home late, now rushes home to catch my daughter awake. My teenage sister, who was living in her own teen world, has come out of her shell to become a delightful aunt to my daughter. And my mom, who used to give me lectures when I was pregnant, now tells the whole world about her granddaughter and is no longer afraid to tell anyone I am a single mom. Everyone has been gloriously infected. It's the kind of virus that spreads overnight and lasts a lifetime.

It is only now, after experiencing the miracle of life, that I have realized that I am truly worthy and blessed. All challenges truly have their rewards. God chose me to be the mother of such a beautiful and amazing baby. What else can be more important than that?

So what if I can't sleep at night. Watching my baby sleep is more relaxing. So what if I don't get to wear trendy clothes, I am happy enough that my pants don't fall off when I am carrying my daughter. So what if I can't go to the latest parties or the new bars. I'm having my own party with my daughter, singing and dancing to her every day. So what if I have to cut my long hair. I'd rather have a bad hair day than get her delicate skin irritated. So what if I have to miss a night out. I'd rather be up early to get my baby ready for the day and myself ready for work. So what if I am a couple of pounds overweight. I'm bursting with love and happiness. So what if I am single and unmarried. I want my daughter to have all of my time and be surrounded by family and friends who love her 100 percent! What matters most to me is that I don't miss a minute of the miracle that she is and that I become the best mom I can be.

If you would ask me if I am still a workaholic and if work still takes top priority, I'd still say yes. My daughter is my work and my life. I've been infected with a virus that just won't go away and has transformed me into a Best Mom in the World wannabe. It's the ultimate virus, one that doesn't call for a cure because it is the cure.

Ching Jorge, 28, is director for programs and research of a Makati-based foundation that focuses on improving the quality of education in the country.

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Imperfect, but still heroes

IT is lamentable that Ambeth Ocampo on every occasion finds a way to denigrate our heroes and the Filipino people. On the day the statue of Marcelo H. del Pilar in Manila was to be unveiled (April 27), Ocampo's column, "Seeing beyond our heroes," dwelt on a minor disagreement between Del Pilar and Jose Rizal: He published Rizal's letter on their disagreement over the editorial policies of La Solidaridad, without writing a single line on why Del Pilar should be honored by the Filipino people.

Disagreements over editorial policies are normal among a newspaper's staff. Even patriots quibble over words and tactics, as those of the great American Revolution did. But they are bound by a common purpose—the freedom and progress of the nation, the dignity and happiness of its citizens. Rizal and Del Pilar were bound together by this purpose.

A talented lawyer and writer, Del Pilar could have lived rich if he had just praised and defended the Spanish rulers instead of condemning them. As editor of La Solidaridad, Del Pilar was a principled, patriotic, nationalistic and courageous journalist. He was no AC-DC—"Attack and Collect, Defend and Collect" newsman. He spent his last days picking up cigarettes from the street.

To set the record straight, Del Pilar loved and admired Rizal. In his letter from Barcelona to his niece in Bulacan, dated March 13, 1889, Del Pilar wrote: "No less than the great and renowned author of the Noli Me Tangere had sent a letter from London to these young women of Malolos, acclaiming and encouraging their acts and it would be well of you to get a copy of this letter for no better legacy can you leave to future generations."

Ocampo shows a distorted sense of history, when he asserts that in the "surly letters" between Rizal and Del Pilar, "we see ourselves in the mirror," and that only by studying the letters, can we "begin the process of change."

No, we must view the totality of the lives of our heroes. For their great accomplishments and sacrifices on behalf of the people, they must be honored and emulated. Their courage and accomplishments mirror our nature and potential as a people. Their faults are common to all humanity, for "to err is human." Heroes of all times and climes have their own individual faults. No man is perfect. But it is not the nose on the dirt that dignifies man, it is his looking up to the skies bright with optimism and pride.

We need heroes, especially in crucial times such as these, because we need models to show us that in times of crises, men must rise above themselves to serve their people.

Is Mr. Ocampo the right man to chair the Philippine Historical Institute and the Philippine Commission on Culture and the Arts?

—MANUEL F. ALMARIO,
mflmario@yahoo.com

When 'enemies of the state' becomes a badge of honor

OUR union, National Food Authority Employees Association (NFA-EA), is one of the pioneer member-organizations of the Confederation for Unity, Recognition and Advancement of Government Employees (Courage), a group that has been identified by the Armed Forces of the Philippines as one of the "enemies of the state" in its slide show "Knowing the Enemy: Are We Missing the Point." We were lumped with the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines, the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, the Catholic Bishops-Businessmen's Conference, Association of Major Religious Superiors (AMRSP), Philippine Independent Church, United Church of Christ of the Philippines, Gomburza, Ibon Data Bank, the Free Legal Assistance Group, Philippine Educational Theater Association, Protestant Lawyers' League of the Philippines and several others as members of the CPP-NPA-NDF (Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-the National Democratic Front) United Front Commission.

The tagging—"shotgun style"—of these groups as enemies of the state once again shows that, in this country, "military intelligence" is a contradiction in terms. In listing down Courage as an enemy of the state, the AFP had no basis; it merely relied on plain conjecture. All of Courage's allied organizations are duly recognized by the government—through the Civil Service Commission, Department of Labor and Employment and Securities and Exchange Commission and their respective agencies—as representatives of rank-and-file government workers.

Our union is actively campaigning against graft and corruption, the imminent privatization of NFA and the policy of laying off thousands of ordinary civil service employees. We actively oppose the government policy of rice trade liberalization because it will allow huge rice cartels to take over the rice industry. We see to it that the benefits of ordinary workers in our agency whose salaries are a pittance are guaranteed, and that their civil and democratic rights are safeguarded. We are critical of government policies and inaction that we find detrimental to the interests of our stakeholders—the farmers, grains retailers and rice consumers.

The AFP's view that our federation has links with communists because it has a critical view of government is both absurd and dangerous. It undermines the validity of seeking redress for grievances; it only encourages more violence against unarmed activists.

On second thought, it may be an honor to be included in the list of "enemies of the state," if this is proof that our union's brave efforts have contributed to saving the local rice industry and the livelihood of millions of small farmers, reduced government corruption and improved the living conditions of government workers.

—ROMAN M. SANCHEZ,
national president,
National Food Authority-Employees
Association (NFA-EA) Courage,
101 Matimyas Bldg.,
E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City

More humane method of animal slaughter

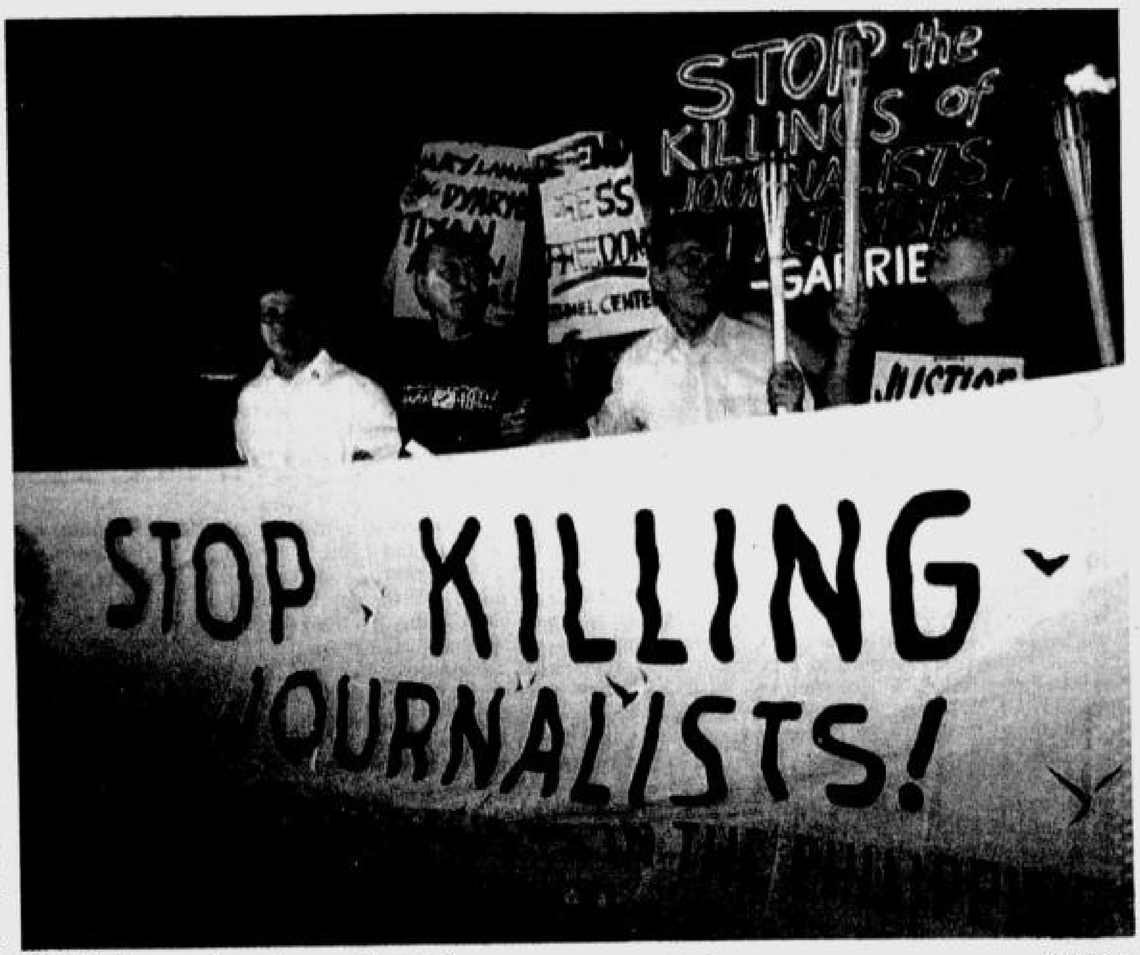
WE are pleased that some fast-food chains in Manila are planning to offer more fruit, vegetables and other healthy options ("Fast-food chains heed call to reinvent burgers," PDI, 4/20/05). Hamburgers, chicken nuggets and milkshakes are extremely high in fat, calories and cholesterol.

Fortunately, people can already get a healthier fast-food fix in some fast-food outlets. One offers a veggie sandwich. Compared to a Whopper's 39 grams of fat and 680 calories, the veggie has only 7 grams of fat and fewer than 300 calories, minus the mayo.

We hope fast-food chains will also take steps to raise and kill animals in a more humane manner. One fast-food chain has already implemented controlled-atmosphere killing—which puts chickens to sleep (by removing the oxygen from their environment and replacing it with an inert gas, like nitrogen or argon)—in some of its European slaughterhouses, and is currently looking to use the technology in the United States as well. But another refuses to stop the practice of slaughtering chickens by breaking their wings and legs and cutting their throats open while they are still conscious.

It's time for fast-food companies to switch to a more humane method of slaughter. For more information, please visit GoVeg.com.

—ROCHELLE REGODON,
rocheller@peta.org



VOICES of concern for endangered "species"

REM ZAMORA

Words paid for in blood

EVERY DAY, print, radio and TV media come up with news about corruption and fraud involving politicians and the army. The stories are usually accompanied by endless debates on the anti-poor and anti-people VAT, skyrocketing oil price hikes, 4-day work week, peace conflict, the unresolved war in Mindanao, and the increasing crime rate in the country. We think we've had too much of the bad news, and we doubt if anybody realizes that the reports are paid for in blood.

Today, I saw the Inquirer editorial inked in red to symbolize love, courage and, most of all, the sacrifice of journalists who were killed because of their resolve to bring out the truth.

Indeed, an era of systematic suppression and repression has again descended upon our nation. Alongside this is the curtailment of the freedom of the press. At the very start of this year, the nation grieved over the brutal slaying of three members of the media, the latest of whom was Marlene Esperat, a well-known truth crusader. The previous year left 13 media practitioners dead, and to this day their killers remain unnamed and faceless.

Appallingly, 33 progressive leaders, including lawyers, priests, peasants, a broadcaster and a councilor, have been slain since January of this year alone. It seems that all who speak out against despotism and the filth of the state end up dead.

During the martial law regime, the media were one of the most powerful forces that helped topple the dictatorship of the late President Marcos. The countless media martyrs and heroes, both mainstream and progressive, have left a legacy of journalism that upholds the truth in defense of the people's rights. Then, the media became the voice and ally of the people in exposing and opposing the ruthless violence instigated by the dictator's army and private executioners.

This legacy poses a great challenge to the present crop of media practitioners, whose ranks are being decimated by some people who would like to send out the message that "anybody" who "tells and opposes," dies!

As the vanguard of truth, media should not give up this legacy. They should continue to fight for the cause of truth, freedom and democracy. Where else will the oppressed masses go? Who else will listen? Who else will be the people's voice?

—MAY VARGAS,
executive director, National Minority
Resource Center-Tunay na Alyansa ng
Bayan Alay sa Katutubo (NMRC-
TABAK), Brgy. Pinyahan,
Diliman, Quezon City,
tabakphils@yahoo.com

Too much for a misplaced project

KUDOS to former Philippine Coconut Authority Administrator Evangeline Valbuena for opposing the use of some P8.4 billion (of the coconut levy fund) for a single project in Agusan del Norte. (PDI, 4/12/05)

I agree with Valbuena that the project "amounts to pouring a big amount of the coco levy fund [into] a single project, in a single town."

As a small coconut farmer myself, I am in favor of the proposal of the League of Provinces of the Philippines to divide the coco levy fund among the different coconut producing provinces where most of the coconut farmers are based.

I likewise support the recommendation of Valbuena that the "government put up a project worth at least P50 million in every coconut-producing province to directly benefit the farmers."

—CRISOSTOMO B. VILAR,
vice mayor, Pagsanjan, Laguna;
vice chair, Coconut Producers
Federation of the Philippines,
Pagsanjan Chapter

More about Esperanto

MA. Ceres P. Doyo's article "Papal bets: Great intellect, unusual personal traits" (PDI, 4/17/05) has just been brought to my attention. Ms Doyo states: "Like many of his colleagues, Miloslav Cardinal Vlk, 73, of the Czech Republic speaks several languages. But he is probably the only one who speaks Esperanto, an invented, artificial language."

May we clarify that Vatican Radio (among several other stations) broadcasts in Esperanto several times each week. Also the late Pope John Paul II included Esperanto in his *"urbi et orbi"* blessings in at least the last 10 years; and there is an active association of Esperanto-speaking Catholics.

The Holy Bible has been available in Esperanto for almost 100 years; an ecumenical prayer and hymn book in Esperanto *"Adoru"* appeared recently (with a foreword by an Esperanto-speaking archbishop), and the *missale romanum* is now available in Esperanto.

Furthermore, Esperanto was not "invented" *ex nihilo*. It was constructed from existing ethnic languages, and now it has many native-speakers. One can get more information about Esperanto at http://esperanto.net/ and at our Vancouver site: http://esperanto.memlink.ca

—AMIKE SALUTAS
bodokan@telus.net

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INQBOX

Some pre-need companies like CAP and Pacific Plans are having problems with the educational plans they've sold. Your message to them?

pathetic! You promised a bright future yrs ago but now U hav just ushred a bleak tomorrow. dont lead dis country into what cud b d DARK AGE. Walang ganyan.
—Den, 18, *makati*

These pre-need firms should have maintained these business targets: Could Always Pay & Pay Exact Tuition (CAP & PET).
—Jacinto S. Lanuza, 41, *Manila*

our parents paid u to the last centavo to ensure us of good education today...
—ryan mangusan, 18, *baguio*

i thnk d govt shud act on this bcoz d fu2re of d phils relies on d next generation. in order 2b leaders of their own nation.
—leana tan, 20, *isabela*

andaming nagsa-suffer dahil sa inyo.. maraming humihinto sa pag-aaral dahil wala nang pambayad.. sana wag nio ng pahirapan pa ang mga ta0ng naghihirap.. :c
—katz, 17, *dava0*

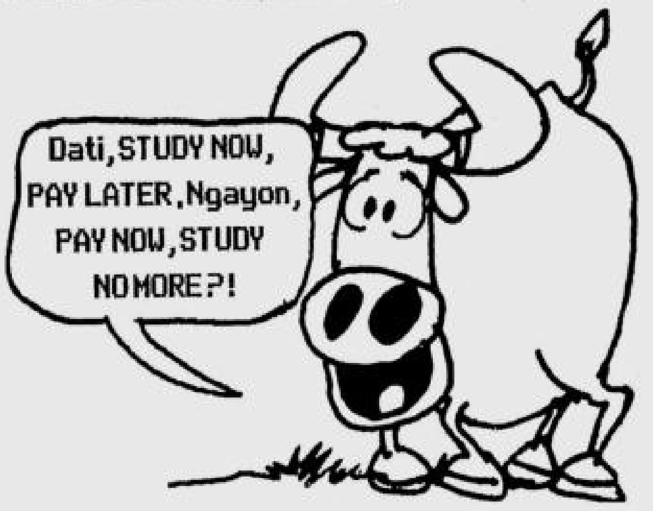
what used to be STUDY NOW, PAY LATER became PAY NOW, STUDY NO MORE!
—ELVIN VENTUCILLO, 31, *Baliuag, Bulacan*

WALA KAYONG KALULUWA. HLNG NA HLANG. ESP LaNG NiYO MGKML NG SALAPI. WaLA KaYoNG PuSO. MaBUTI SA U NA IPaKAiN SA PATiNG.
—JOSE ENSOMO, 43, *Surigao City*

CAP and PACIFIC PLANS should've educated themselvs 1st. E di sana wala clang problems ngayon.
—baby panganiban, 65, *bulacan*

Stop collecting. Start paying.
—Antonio Andaluz, 48, *Parañaque City*

CAP-palpakan at PPI (Puro Pangako Ito). You shud revamp ur management and penalize those responsible for dis negligence
—Tyrone Guya, 30, *Manila*


Dati, STUDY NOW, PAY LATER. Ngayon, PAY NOW, STUDY NO MORE?!

pay up then close shop!
—henry mapue, *bulacan*

CAP itinatasa nyo pera sa butas niyong bso, PACIFIC alkancya nyo kasing lawak ng dagat, Paspiko kaya pera di makita ..
—VIVIAN S. KIANGAN, 27, *Baguio*

kc ginagamit ang pondo sa pagtatayo ng ibang negosyo tulad ng bangko, Realty atbp. yan ang OLIGARKIYA Sa PINANSYA, TUBO, Di SERBISYO.

—LOUIE LACHICA, 32, *MANILA*

please be more responsible in this situation, you know the limitations of your company. give people benefits, not sufferings!
—carmela dorde, 20, *guinobatan*

pagbebenta kc kaya nga tinatangkilik ng bayan ang kanilang produkto para may kagapay cla hindi ang pabigat, maawa kayo
—pepito d. albareda jr., 30, *tarlac city*

CAP &PacificPlans should think of ways on how they cud give their plan holders d benefits which r rightfully theirs
—renelyn de guia, 27, *makati city*

Problems, problems, problems...so...what else is new?
—Cesar Marinius M. Reyes, *Agusan del Norte*

kung sa tingin nila di nila kayang tugunan at gampanan ang kanilang ibenebenta sa publiko, mas mabuting itigil na nila..
—pepito d. albareda jr., 30, *tarlac city*

Stop selling temporarily. Account d need of d current planholders, den invest wisely.
—Roderick f tamacay, 22, *makati city*

pre-need companies should honor the contract signed and agreed upon by both parties. they have moral obligations
—jaypee parreño, *davao*

Pre-need c0mpanies make use of the p0wers fr0m the Government and th0se of other plan h0lders to l0ok t0ward this dilemma.
—Ralphmar Onez, 18, *CDO*

if CAP &PACIFIC PLANS r havin problems, what more are d planholders hu 2 are part of dem? Pls dont add more load 2us. Dey shud find solutions
—cristina e. go, 29, *iligan cty*

Huwag nyo lokohin ang mga tao. Ma-konsensya kayo. BAKA MAKARMA SANA KAYO!!
—Vic Pasco, 47, *Palo, Leyte*

PARENTS DREAM that their KIDS FINISH their STUDIES. CAP &PACIFIC SHOULD have SINCERELY SHARED their DREAMS.
—Jacinto LANUZA, 41, *Manila*

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Soldiers attack Ka Roger camp

Communist spokesman escapes after 20-minute clash

LUCENA CITY—For the past four days, the military's Southern Luzon Command has been conducting massive attacks in the hinterland camp of communist spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal in the Quezon-Bicol boundary area, a source from the New People's Army told the INQUIRER through text messages yesterday afternoon.

The source said the military penetrated the NPA camp located in Sitio Munting Dumagmang, Barangay Dumagmang, Labo, Camarines Norte near Barangay Mapulot, Tagkawayan, Quezon at around 11:30 a.m. on May 5.

The informant said 20 minutes of gunfight ensued between the attacking government soldiers and the NPA rebels but Rosal was able to escape along with some of his security escorts and technical staff.

He said Rosal and his group reached the forested area near Barangay Balisbitan in Labo, Camarines Norte the next day but again encountered a blocking force that was set up by the military, assisted by military helicopters.

Unaccounted for

"The comrades were also able to score against the enemy. Ka Roger was safe and the other comrades but at least five of his staff were still unaccounted," the source said.

The INQUIRER has been trying to contact Rosal through his mobile phone for the past several days but the unit was always off or had no signal. But in a text message yesterday afternoon, he finally replied: "I'm safe."

Solcom chief Lt. Gen. Pedro Cabuay confirmed to the INQUIRER that there had been military operations in the area and neighboring places due to the harassment being done by the rebels against detachments and small operational units maintaining security for the civilians.

Cabuay, however, could not confirm whether there were casualties on the rebel side.

"But definitely, we don't have any report of casualties among our soldiers. This, I can assure their families. It was unfair to the families of the soldiers in the area to be given false report by the enemies that there were casualties among the government men, as it would cause them worries and anxieties," he added.

False report

The commander of the Armed Forces' Southern Luzon Command has denied the earlier claim of communist spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal that 11 government soldiers under the 201st Army's Infantry Brigade were killed on April 24 in a firefight with the NPA Apolonio Mendoza Command in Sitio Villaminda, Barangay Sto Niño-Ilaya, Lopez, Quezon.

Cabuay, Solcom commander, said none of the 201st IB soldiers under Brig. Gen. Alfonso Bernate, was reported killed.

"In fact, they are all very much alive. General Bernate is even very much willing to resign from the military if Ka Roger could present any single casualty from his unit," Cabuay stressed.

He said it was unfair for the families of the soldiers in the field to be worrying just because of the claim of Rosal that 11 soldiers were killed in an encounter on April 24.

"Imagine the anxiety that the false report has caused the families of soldiers who are assigned in the 201st IB," the Solcom chief said. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

'Ecija town vice mayor's dad killed in office

By Anselmo Roque
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SAN LEONARDO, Nueva Ecija—Barely 35 hours following the death of a lawyer and his son in Llanera town, the father of San Leonardo Vice Mayor Marvin Martin was killed in his cold storage plant office in Barangay Castellano here on Monday.

Unidentified gunmen shot Roberto Martin, 48, former president of the Nueva Ecija Contractors' Association, in the back, shoulder and right leg. He died before reaching the hospital in nearby Cabanatuan City.

Senior Insp. Peter Madria, San Leonardo police chief, said the victim had just finished playing table tennis when the gunmen aboard a van shot him at 7 a.m. He said Martin was able to run to his office but a bullet hit his back.

Madria said a check with the Land Transportation Office showed that the van used by the suspects was owned by a manufacturing firm in Paco, Manila.

Police recovered 20 bullet shells from the scene.

Nelson Brioso, plant supervisor, said about 50 customers were buying ice at the plant when armed men fired their guns.

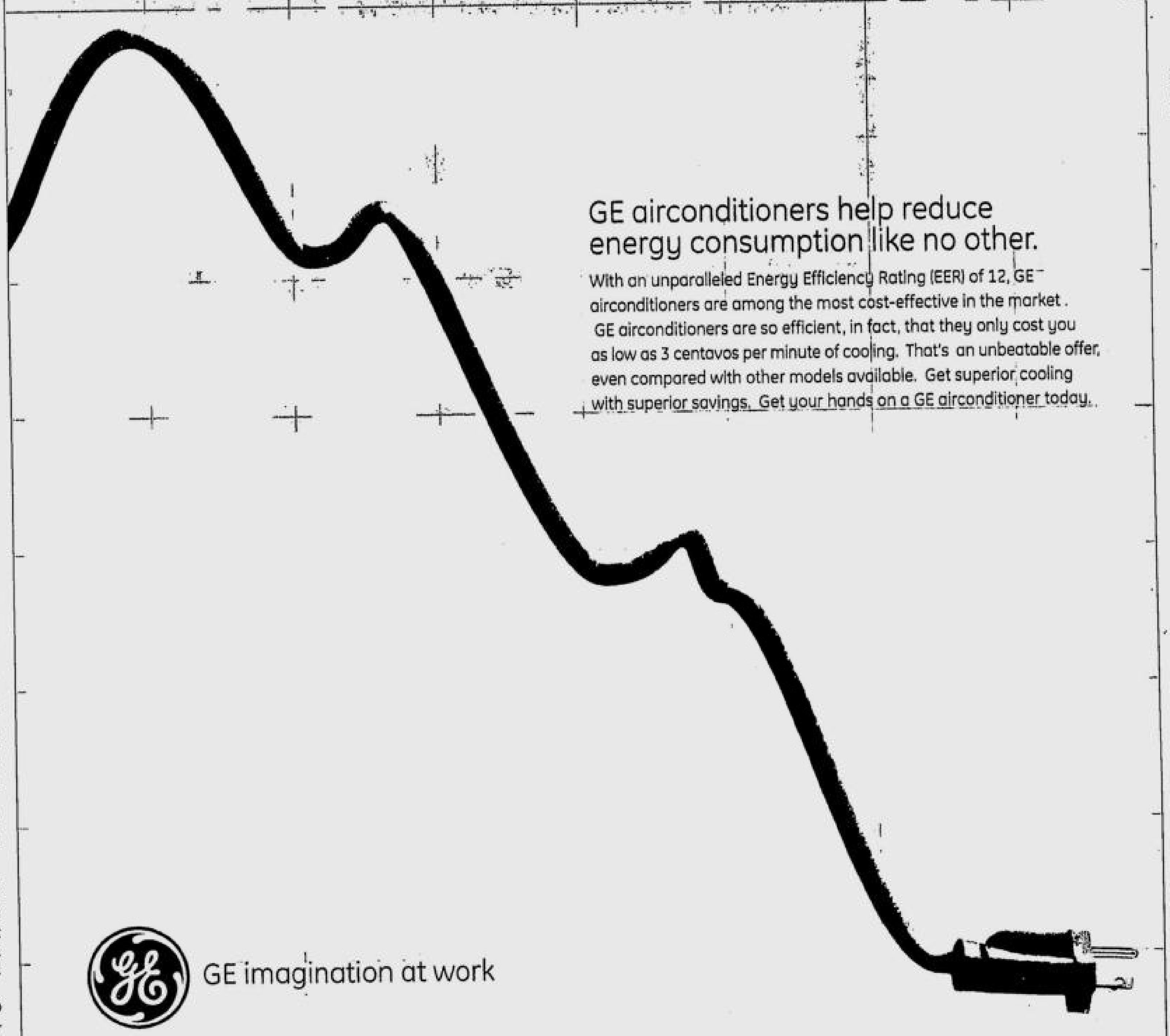
Martin was also running a small construction company.

On Saturday night, Ambrosio Matias Jr., 47, and his son, Leonard, 22, a law student in Baguio City, were killed by a lone gunman in their rest-house in Barangay General Luna in Llanera town, 26 km east of Cabanatuan City.

Police said Matias, some members of his family and some visitors were at the rest-house when the gunman shot him in the head at about 8 p.m.

Stunned, the younger Matias tried to check what happened to his father and the suspect shot him in the chest.

The lawyer's wife, Felicidad, chief of Barangay General Luna, was not hurt.



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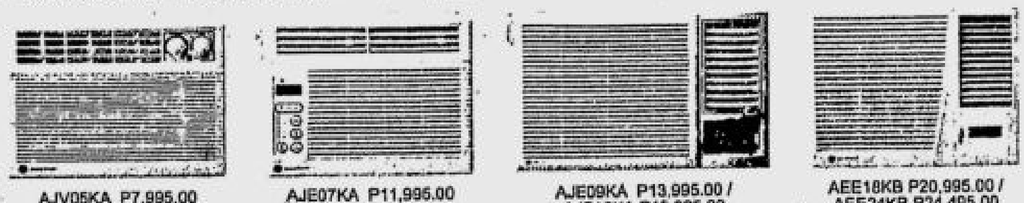

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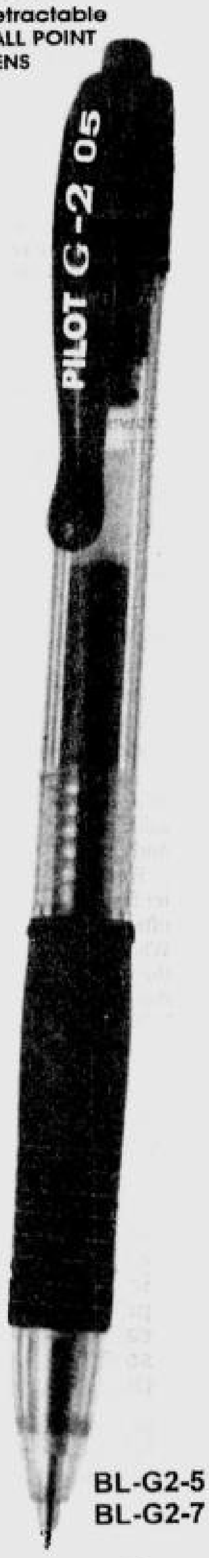

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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Return of 'jueteng' awaited in Pampanga

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—The question is not so much whether or not Central Luzon is truly "jueteng"-free.

In the region where the illegal numbers game is considered to be most robust in terms of employment and patronage—hiring an estimated 20,000 people and having aficionados from among poor and middle-class folk in six of seven provinces where the population is over 8 million—the query is more on when jueteng would resume.

For the police, the answer is certainly a flat no, or not anywhere in the coming weeks or months.

"*Mahihirapan silang mag*-resume (Jueteng operators will have a hard time resuming it)," said Chief Supt. Alejandro Lapinid, Central Luzon police chief.

The INQUIRER interviewed him Monday, a week since the game had been stopped.

Lapinid said jueteng would have a difficult revival this time around because the instruction of Director General Arturo Lomibao, Philippine National Police chief, was to ensure its "total stop."

"The first order of the day was to stop it," Lapinid said, adding that police commanders in the provinces, towns and cities have been reminded of administrative sanctions should the game persist in their areas.

Lapinid himself comes from a background of a supposed strong drive against jueteng. On May 2, he replaced Chief Supt. Rowland Albano who, since assuming the Central Luzon police post on Dec. 25 last year, had been allegedly collecting protection money shared on a 40-60 scheme with benefactors from among PNP officials and politicians.

Albano, who was assigned to the PNP directorate for research and development, denied doing that.

Among cobradores (collectors) displaced by the new drive, what was happening was, simply a "jueteng truce."

It is, they said, but a result of "cooperation" by their financiers or operators.

"We only stopped because our operator agreed to stop in the meantime. Else, we would have continued because this is our job," a collector in San Fernando, Pampanga's capital, said.

She claimed her boss, who operates a "franchise" allegedly from Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda, had received warnings, if not advice, from police officials.

The daily raids, she added, have made it costly for her boss to be paying P20,000 in bail money.

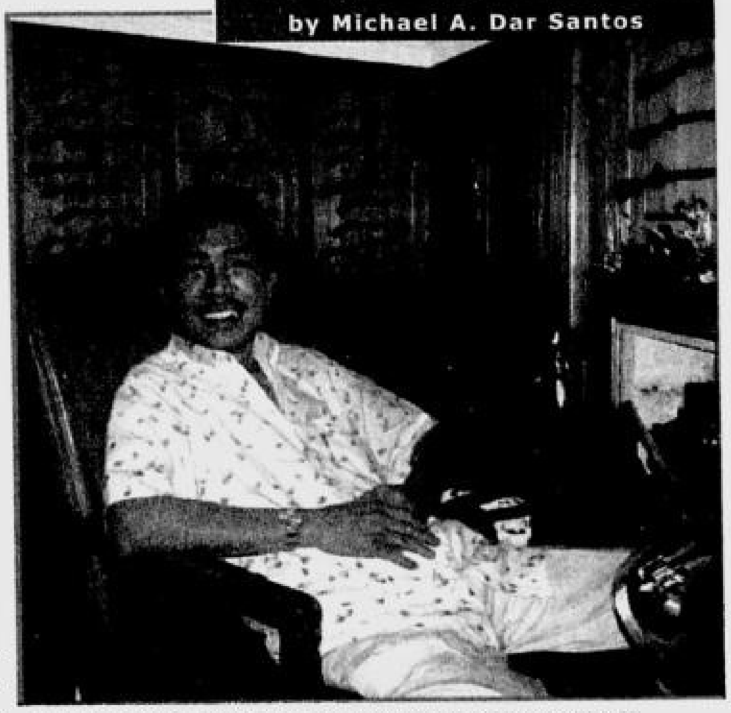
Pineda, through his close relatives, has denied reclaiming jueteng territories in Central and Northern Luzon after the May 2004 elections or three years since his supposed patron, former President Joseph Estrada, was ousted in January 2001 over the "juetenggate" scandal.

In San Fernando, at least five bet collection stations using newspaper stalls as fronts have been removed since last week. Collectors have stopped making the rounds of villages, subdivisions and even government offices.

Like in the past, the collector said she hoped the jueteng ceasefire would not last long. To her, the resumption was a matter of survival, as she earned at least 10 percent for every peso that was bet. In her case, she earned from P200 to P250 daily and double these amounts on paydays and holidays. *With a report from Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Eric Lucero THE MAN'S ALL SUGAR AND SPICE

by Michael A. Dar Santos



LUCERO AT HOME WITH HIS GUN COLLECTION

Think of three star chefs, and the names that come to mind are likely to be Wolfgang, Daniel or Mario. Do the same with three famous pastry chefs, and the names might be Sherry Yard, Gale and Claudia. The hot side of the kitchen may be a man's world, but right now, women still rule the sweet side. Not if top Filipino pastry chef and Luscious Cakes and Pastries owner Eric Lucero can help it.

Most culinary experts have acknowledged Eric as the best-known pastry chef in the country today. Figuring out his popularity in a business as whimsical as food often defies logic. But something about the desserts he is creating – grown-up popsicles from seasonal fruits or lemon-curd tartlets with raspberries – seems to resonate among diners.

Influential foodies are impressed with Eric's work as well: for five years running, he has won the James Beard pastry-chef award, an honor that is the culinary equivalent of an Oscar. "Most of the cakes and pastries I make came from heirloom recipes from the family and kitchen experiences with my mom," Eric said.

"Mom" is none other than Carmencita Ojeda-Lucero, who set up Lucious Cakes and Pastries – the country's foremost bakeshop franchise – literally from scratch in the 1960s. "My mom has been an avid fan of Maida Heatter and Flo Braker, who made their names as home bakers and elevated their craft to another level. Growing up, I always loved watching my mom do their recipes and later add some Pinoy touches. After finishing my business degree, I convinced her to enroll me in a culinary school in France. My friends thought I was being "girly" about it but, believe me, many women find guys who cook very masculine and sexy," Eric said.

During the 1990s, Eric worked with renowned male pastry chefs from France, Austria and Switzerland in some of Europe's fine hotels. And in between stints, he invested in several food and beverage ventures, built his dream homes in Tagaytay and California, and married long-time sweetheart Cynthia Robles, only daughter of Ambassador Nicandro Robles and world-renowned food and wine connoisseur Karen Estrada-Robles. They are blessed with two sons, 12-year-old Mark and nine-year-old Dominic.

Eric soon relocated his family to Vienna after he was assigned to be general manager of Luscious Bakeshop's European commissary. But in 2001, they all came back to the Philippines where Eric took over Luscious' overall operations. His wife, Cynthia, on the other hand, started her own business and opened the Purple Pear Bar, one of Makati's premier nightspots in which Eric has a major stake. "The Purple Pear is my wife's pride and joy. She's so protective of it that she'd go all out to make Purple Pear successful," Eric said.

As for Eric's own company, he has this to say, "After four decades of operation, more than 50 outlets nationwide and plans to enter the Asian market scene, Luscious Cakes and Pastries is now one of the best bakeshop franchises in the world today," Eric said.

However, this self-proclaimed dough boy is not just all about sweets. When asked what he does with his time away from the kitchen he replied, "I collect guns. From antique and modern, military and sporting, from 15th century arms and armor to modern assault rifles. Not only do I collect firearms, I also collect their accessories and cartridges."

Most of Eric's gun collection is in their home in Los Angeles. But here in the Philippines, his collection is a wide array of rifles used during the Spanish era, American occupation and World War II. He also has five Magnums, two Barettas and three .38 caliber pistols neatly displayed in a polished Mahogany table.

"I usually clean my collection during weekends but I never let my kids touch the guns or let them go to my study where they are kept. Cynthia and I are the only ones with the key. Aside from my fondness for them, another probable reason why we have guns at home is for protection. But only to be used as a last resort if my family's in danger," Eric said.

Every month, Eric takes the family to a shooting range in Batangas where he participates in target shooting competitions. He has even managed to convince Cynthia to fire a couple of rounds. "She's still a long way from becoming a sharpshooter, but for a novice, she handles a gun very well," Eric said.

A pastry chef that loves guns. "It's kinda like sugar and spice. But because I take baking more seriously than I do shooting guns, the only shooting you'll get from me are the "shots" of icing from the cake decorating syringe and the shooters you'd down at the Purple Pear Bar," Eric chided.

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MANTAWI FESTIVAL
Fireworks light up the sky during the Mantawi Festival held at the Cebu boardwalk, a new reclamation area in Mandaue City, Cebu.
EDWIN BACASMAS

PNP says running after 'jueteng' lords tough

DONSOL, Sorsogon—Philippine National Police Director General Arturo Lomibao, the top policeman of the country, admitted here that it would be too hard for them to pin down alleged "jueteng" lords in the country.

Lomibao said police were helpless in pursuing those involved in the illegal numbers game even though they were publicly known as being behind this form of gambling.

"We work by evidence. So kung *wala namang* witnesses (So if there are no witnesses) to these cases, it's very, very hard to investigate and to prosecute," he said in a visit here on Friday.

Lomibao said it would take no less than all the members of society to eradicate this kind of gambling.

Police and government officials have been under fire lately for their failure to stop jueteng.

They are believed to be receiving millions of pesos per month in bribe money.

The PNP has in its possession a watch list which contains names of alleged jueteng lords in the country, Lomibao said. But he refused to name names.

Asked if it contains the same names as those in the list of Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz, Lomibao said he had not seen it yet and he was not furnished a copy of such list being held by the bishop.

Lomibao is also not keen on the idea of legalizing jueteng.

He said it is up to Congress to decide.

In Calapan, Oriental Mindoro officials expressed helplessness about jueteng.

"Can we really do something about jueteng?" asked Oriental Mindoro Bishop Warlito Cajandig on Friday before the multisectoral Provincial Care Council, whose members are major decision-makers in the province.

"We give up (on the idea) that the government can do anything about jueteng, though we hope," said Cajandig. *Bobby Q. Labalan and Madonna Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Vice govs condemn coup plotters, vow to back GMA

BOHOL Vice Gov. Julius Herrera, president of the Vice Governors League of the Philippines, today said a quick-fix solution offered by antigovernment sectors to replace the Arroyo administration would not solve the ills of the country overnight.

In a press statement, he asked the people to be patient and support the duly constituted authority while condemning the plotters who are reportedly planning again to carry out destabilization moves to topple the present administration.

Herrera said a conspiracy to overthrow President Macapagal-Arroyo undermines the true spirit of democracy, jeopardizes the greater interests of the Filipino people and exacerbates the condition of the country caused by political and economic instabilities.

"While it is true that the government is struggling to address its various problems, overthrowing the Arroyo administration is not the instant remedy that will make problems disappear overnight," said Herrera.

The country's 79 vice governors are preparing a resolution of support to the Arroyo administration, said Herrera, adding that "the reform measures being pursued by the government are being strongly supported by local leaders."

INQBox Question of the Week

More than 90 journalists have been killed in the Philippines since 1986. The Committee to Protect Journalists has identified the Philippines as "the most murderous country for journalists," followed by Iraq, Colombia, Bangladesh and Russia. What should be done to stop the killings?

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AMAZING RACE
Ifugao men display their indigenous scooters at the start of a race recently to celebrate the province's festival.
EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Fund problems threaten drive vs marijuana

By Delmar Cariño
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Legal and protocol questions on fund realignment are threatening to derail President Macapagal-Arroyo's proposed projects designed to eradicate marijuana plantations in two Cordillera towns.

The projects involve the construction of farm-to-market roads in Kapangan, Benguet, and the building of cable cars in Tinglayan, Kalinga.

The fund source for the projects is supposed to be the P41-million savings from the rehabilitation of the Palispis-Aspiras National Highway, formerly Marcos Highway, in Benguet and La Union. The project is foreign-funded.

Ms Arroyo said the amount, which had already been allotted for the construction of a flyover near the Baguio General Hospital, should be realigned for the Kapangan and Kalinga projects. She directed the Department of Public Works and Highways regional office here on March 12 to immediately implement the projects.

But the DPWH could hardly get off the ground since, it said, the move to realign the P41 million may get the government into serious trouble.

It said realigning the amount would run counter to the terms of reference of the foreign loan from which the fund came and might also provoke a court suit from the winning bidder of the flyover project.

In a report to the President dated March 23, Mariano Alquiza, DPWH director in Cordillera, said since the savings form part of a foreign fund, realigning it might violate international conditions of foreign grants.

In addition, it said the government had already awarded the flyover project to a contractor and it was left with no option but to honor its obligation to fulfill the terms of the contract.

"A notice to proceed has already been issued to the contractor and in fact he has already accomplished 1.45 per cent of the project," it said.

The DPWH ordered the project temporarily stopped when Ms Arroyo directed the fund realignment on March 12.

But Benguet Rep. Samuel Dangwa said the questions raised on realigning the P41 million should not be the reason to abandon the Kapangan and Kalinga projects.

He said the government must look for other sources of funds since the projects, he said, "are actually presidential commitments to solve the marijuana problem."

"The President's directive on the projects was well received by the people of Kapangan and Kalinga," he said. "If the P41 million is not available, then I urge the President to look for other source of fund since the projects means a lot to the people."

Alquiza said the location of the marijuana-producing barangays in the two towns and the absence of electricity contribute to the difficulty of laying the ground work for the President's order to build the roads and cable cars.

In Kapangan, opening new roads is not enough since the town's terrains require the maintenance of "all weather roads" to be able to cut through the marijuana areas, he said.

Poor revenue collection spurs Customs shake-up

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Customs Commissioner Alberto Lina has ordered a shakeup in the Bureau of Customs following the agency's failure to achieve its P39.9-billion target collection for the first quarter.

Lina said on Friday that he started transferring high performing customs collectors to larger ports in the hope of reversing the 2-3 percent decline in the collection target registered from January to March.

"We need to work harder than before, we missed a little of our target in the first quarter and I could not afford to repeat that this second quarter, and one of the strategies would be assigning the top performer collectors in bigger ports to earn more," Lina told the INQUIRER on Friday.

For the whole year, he said he wanted collections to hit P170 billion, or P15 billion more than the official target of P155 billion.

Lina, who replaced George Jereos on Feb. 23, said he could not be complacent because he does not want to be summoned by Congress if collections continue to decline.

Lina said he wanted to ensure that the turn-over of responsibilities to high performing collectors would be smooth.

He said from here, he was assigning Lourdes Mangaoang to head the Cebu Port Office "for her sterling performance as district collector."

"I am very confident that she could make it, her performance in this port has been excellent and I am 100 percent sure she could also do the same in Cebu Port," Lina said.

The Port of Cagayan de Oro has been a consistent top grosser from among the 15 collection districts in the country in terms of monthly collections since 2003.

It is now the only "billionaire port" in Mindanao.

Billionaire ports are those that have collections of at least P1 billion.

Meanwhile, Lina said the incentives given to customs employees were also expected to boost collections.

He said the implementation of the Lateral Attrition Law would also have a positive impact on the efforts to increase collections in the country's ports.

The law penalizes revenue employees if they fail to meet their collection targets. *Grace C. Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Army says 4 NPAs slain in reb camp raid

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—The military said four New People's Army (NPA) rebels were killed as government soldiers captured the camp of the Northeast Mindanao Regional Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines in Surigao del Sur on Sunday.

But Maj. Alexis Noel Bravo, spokesperson of the 4th Infantry Division based here, refused to disclose the location of the camp, saying it might jeopardize continuing operations.

Bravo said the latest camp to fall was the fourth since March.

He said the camp was inside a big cave where assorted firearms and bomb-making materials were found.

The explosives, Bravo said, included finished and unfinished assembled land mines, sacks of ammonium nitrates, detonating cords and cans where chemicals were placed.

Bravo said they were certain that the explosives were intended for the NPA's operations against the military.

Col. Ricardo David, 402nd Brigade Commander, led the military operations that started last week in Marihatag, Surigao del Sur. *Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

TREE PLANTATIONS

Negros group seeks relaxed rules on wood processing plants

By Romy G. Amarado
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—The Negros Oriental Wood Processors and Planters Association (NOWPPA) has asked the lifting of the moratorium on the processing of new applications for wood processing plants and the suspension and exclusion from issuance of cutting permits to privately-owned and planted trees.

This appeal was contained in the petition filed by NOWPPA addressed to Environment Secretary Michael Defensor last April 26.

The group said their "livelihood and the economy of the province" would be adversely affected if these restrictions continued to stay in effect in the province.

The NOWPPA is an association composed of more than 100 lumber dealers, furniture makers, tree planters and others engaged in wood-based business industry.

According to Chamberlain Babiera, of the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office, then Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun issued a memorandum circular dated July 22, 2003, ordering a moratorium on the processing and establishment of new wood processing plants.

He said the DENR has a standing policy of "excluding from issuance of cutting permit those privately-owned and planted within tax-declared land(s)."

But the petitioners, headed by their president Ruperto Cadayday, in their petition admitted that "some of us are operating our wood processing plants without legitimate permit from the (Department of Environment and Natural Resources)."

The petitioners also said some of their private plantations are within tax-declared alienable and disposable land.

They added that "lumber supply of our wood processing plants mostly come from private plantations..."

The petitioners said they "strongly support the government's efforts in its campaign against illegal logging and other activities destructive to our environment."

'World-class' cop station planned in Donsol

DONSOL, Sorsogon—Philippine National Police chief Director General Arturo Lomibao said this town is a world-class tourist destination, so it must have a world-class police station.

Lomibao and Gov. Raul R. Lee led top police and local officials in the ground-breaking ceremony for the new police station that will soon rise near the Tourism Center at Barangay Dancalan here.

He said the police station will be equipped with modern facilities like computers and police cars and will be manned by specially-trained police personnel armed with the necessary firearms.

He said the move is in accordance with his program of building strong police stations, especially in tourist destinations.

The station will cost P3 million and will be constructed on a 400-square-meter lot donated by a local farmer, Herminio Añonuevo.

Meanwhile, Lee said the provincial government is donating P1.5 million for the construction of the station while the other half will come from the police fund.

He said this is also in line with the local government's thrust of ensuring the safety of the tourists that continuously flock to this town to watch the whale sharks.

The governor said that aside from improving security, they are also improving the place's accessibility to tourists.

Lee revealed that his office is allocating P10 million for the improvement of the road going to the Woodland Resort, which serves as the jump-off point for butanding interaction. *Bobby Q. Labalan, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

RISKY REST
VINCENT CABREZA/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU
A foreign tourist takes a rest on a sidewalk in Baguio City unmindful of pedestrians and parked vehicles.

Injured whale rescued at mouth of Bohol river

By Chito A. Fuentes
PDI Visayas Bureau

LOAY, Bohol—A female melon-headed whale shark was rescued while it lay helpless on Monday dawn near the shore at the mouth of the Loay River.

Loay Councilor Antonio Supanga said he was on his regular morning walk about 4:30 a.m. when he noticed a handful of people milling near the mouth of the river in Sitio Pantalan, Poblacion Ubos.

"When I saw what we initially thought was a dolphin, I immediately called Vice Mayor (Tiburcio) Bullecer Jr. who in turn alerted station dyRD to inform (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) personnel since it was still very early and offices were still closed," Supanga said.

Supanga said he also directed SPO3 Joven Blaya and deputized fish warden Celso Napalla to watch over the whale until the DENR personnel arrived.

Since the area was just about 100 meters from the fish port, he said he feared that the whale's injuries might have been intentionally inflicted.

The perpetrators, he added, might have stopped chasing the whale out of fear of being caught because it was already close to daybreak.

Cora Colarines and spouses Vilma and Leonardo Elle, who were personnel of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) in Tagbilaran, proceeded to Loay, a distance of 18 km, after hearing of the beached whale over the radio.

Vilma said the 22-meter whale weighing over 200 kilos had seven superficial wounds but there were bruises in the right portion of its head.

"It might have been rammed or smashed into something," she said.

The female whale was guided through shallow waters to a beach behind the Loay town hall where it lay until it was ready to return to the sea.

Colarines said Dr. Frederick Madriñan, of the Provincial Veterinarian's Office, injected the whale with antibiotics and applied disinfectant on the wounds.

About 10:30 a.m., or six hours after it was found, the whale tried to head back into the sea but turned back to the shore after swimming about 100 meters.

The Cenro personnel regularly poured seawater on the whale, as it lay almost motionless on its belly on the shore.

Leonardo said they would continue to watch over the ailing whale until it voluntarily swims back into the ocean.

He noted that the water off Loay is a natural habitat of whales and dolphins, including the melon-headed whale, which is the smallest in the whale family.

Joselito Baritua, who heads a dolphin and whale watching tour group, said the sea off Loay is just 14 kilometers to Pamilacan Island where these sea mammals are commonly sighted in early mornings.

ROUNDUP

State of calamity urged

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The provincial agriculturist's office has recommended that the entire South Cotabato be place under a state of calamity as the long dry spell brought about by the El Niño phenomenon has wrought havoc on rice and corn crops in the province. Rey Legaste, provincial agriculturist, told the provincial board that the drought had already destroyed some P99.7 million worth of corn and rice plantations in Koronadal City and the towns of Polomolok, Tupi, Tampakan, Banga, Surallah, Norala, Sto. Niño, Tantangan, Lake Sebu and T'boli. Putting the province under a state of calamity allows the use of its calamity funds. But Legaste said the entire amount would not be used as his office had devised a program aimed at cushioning the impact of the El Niño among farmers and other sectors.

Aquiles Z. Zonio,PDI Mindanao Bureau

US businessman convicted

BACOLOD CITY—The Municipal Trial Court in Cities (MTCC) has found an American businessman guilty of grave oral defamation for calling a lawyer a "criminal," "thief" and a "shrewd person" in front of several people. Judge Napoleon Diamente sentenced Charles Mosser to a jail term of one month and one day to two years and four months. He also ordered him to pay lawyer Arnel Lapore P100,000 in moral damages, P100,000 in exemplary damages and P100,000 in civil indemnity. Mosser, who is married to a Negrense, is a director of the Mosser Group of Companies and owns a string of hotels and apartment buildings in San Francisco, California. His wife owns a resort in Hinigaran town, a pension house in the city, and an agro-forestry project in Isabela and Himamaylan towns. Lapore, the legal counsel of the Mosser Group, said the American badmouthed him during a meeting of company employees in April 2002.

Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

Gov raises meningo alert

BACOLOD CITY—Gov. Joseph Marañon has sent out an alert to persons in Ilog and Kabankalan towns who might have come into contact with a 14-year-old boy suspected to have died of meningococcemia in a hospital here last week. Jose Ma. Valencia, Marañon's chief of staff, said the boy, of Barangay Bocana, Ilog, had been suffering from high fever for three days before he was brought to the Gumercindo Garcia Memorial Hospital in Kabankalan. The patient later developed rashes, prompting the doctors to transfer him to the Riverside Medical Center (RMC) here where he died. The boy was buried in a sealed coffin at the Dancalan public cemetery in Ilog, 109 km south of this city. Dr. Dave Gamboa, head of the emergency room at the RMC, said the boy showed all the symptoms of meningococcemia although it was not definitely confirmed that he died of it.

Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

Dengue fever kills boy

MAASIN CITY—Dengue fever killed a 5-year-old boy and sent 29 persons, mostly children, to the hospital in two towns in Southern Leyte. The boy, of Barangay Poblacion, San Ricardo town, died last week, said Dr. Leonardo Eway, chief of the Integrated Provincial Health Office. "The mother is very hardheaded. She refused to bring the boy to the hospital," he said. Eway said dengue had downed 16 children and three adults in the same village since May 3 when the disease was first reported. The patients were brought to a district hospital in the adjacent Pintuyan town. Eway said 10 children from Barangay Ichon, Macrohon town had also fallen ill of dengue since Sunday when the first case was reported. They were brought to the IPHO for treatment.

Jani Arnaiz, PDI Visayas Bureau

Bad 'lechon' downs 28

CEBU CITY—Twenty-eight persons were hospitalized after they ate "lechon" (roasted pig) in Danao City on Thursday. The victims were mostly employees of the Danao City Hall who bought the food from a vendor, according to a report of SPO4 Jose Salingua of the city police. Dr. Carmencita Lofpe of the Danao City District Hospital said the patients started eating the lechon at 6 p.m. and experienced stomach pains and vomiting three hours later. At least 19 victims were brought to the hospital that night and more patients arrived the following day. Lofpe said all the patients claimed they did not notice any foul odor on the lechon as it tasted good.

Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau

Cop in extort arrested

MAASIN CITY—A traffic policeman was arrested by members of the provincial police on Sunday for allegedly extorting money from the dispatcher of a bus plying the Manila-Maasin route. SPO2 Manolito Orais Ozon, 48, was collared by policemen led by Supt. Alfredo Sabornido, provincial police director, after he received P1,500 in marked money from Emilio Largo of CUL Bus Line. Ozon denied that he was regularly asking money from the bus company. He claimed it was the first time the company offered him money. Largo, who reported the extortion, said Ozon and another traffic officer had been taking turns asking for P2,000 a week from the company which did not hold a franchise to ply the route.

Jani Arnaiz, PDI Visayas Bureau

Militiaman shot dead

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Four unidentified armed men riding on two stolen motorcycles shot dead a member of the Citizens' Armed Forces Geographical Unit (Cafgu) in Balayan, Batangas on Friday afternoon. Chief Supt. Jesus Versoza, Calabarzon police director, identified the victim as Jose Balusag, 38, assigned with the 10th Cafgu Company of the Army's 59th Infantry Battalion in Balayan. He said the victim was standing in front of a business establishment at around 3:30 p.m. in Barangay Caloocan when four men armed with .45 cal. pistols approached him and shot him several times in different parts of his body. Balusag was declared dead on arrival at the nearby Don Manuel Lopez Memorial Hospital.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

ENROLLMENT TIME

Only 1 E. Visayas school to raise fees

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—Only one of the 65 government and private colleges and universities in Eastern Visayas has asked for an increase in tuition this school year, according to the Commission on Higher Education regional office (CHEd-8).

Ciriaco Sabino Jr., CHEd-8 education and supervisor II, said College of Maasin in Maasin City, Southern Leyte was the lone tertiary school in the region that asked for a tuition adjustment.

He said the school informed the office that it would impose a 10-percent increase, but the adjustment would affect only incoming first year students.

Tuition will increase from P210 per unit to P230. The school offers courses that include education, computer and social sciences.

"This is really a good news for our parents who have children studying in college. This will enable them to save from additional expenses," Sabino said.

He said no other school in the region would jack up their tuition this school year because the deadline for the colleges and universities to inform CHEd of any increase lapsed on Feb. 28.

The College of Maasin, which is being run by the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), informed CHEd of its plan to increase tuition in the first week of February, Sabino said.

It said it had to address the clamor of its personnel for a wage increase and to improve some of the school's facilities.

Asked why other schools did not ask for an increase, Sabino replied: "Increase in tuition results in the decline of the number of students. Thus, these schools chose not to impose any increase."

Last school year, nine colleges in Eastern Visayas raised tuition by about 10 percent. One of them was the College of Maasin.

Records at the CHEd-8 showed that for school year 2004-05, 33,372 students were enrolled in the region's 65 colleges and universities.

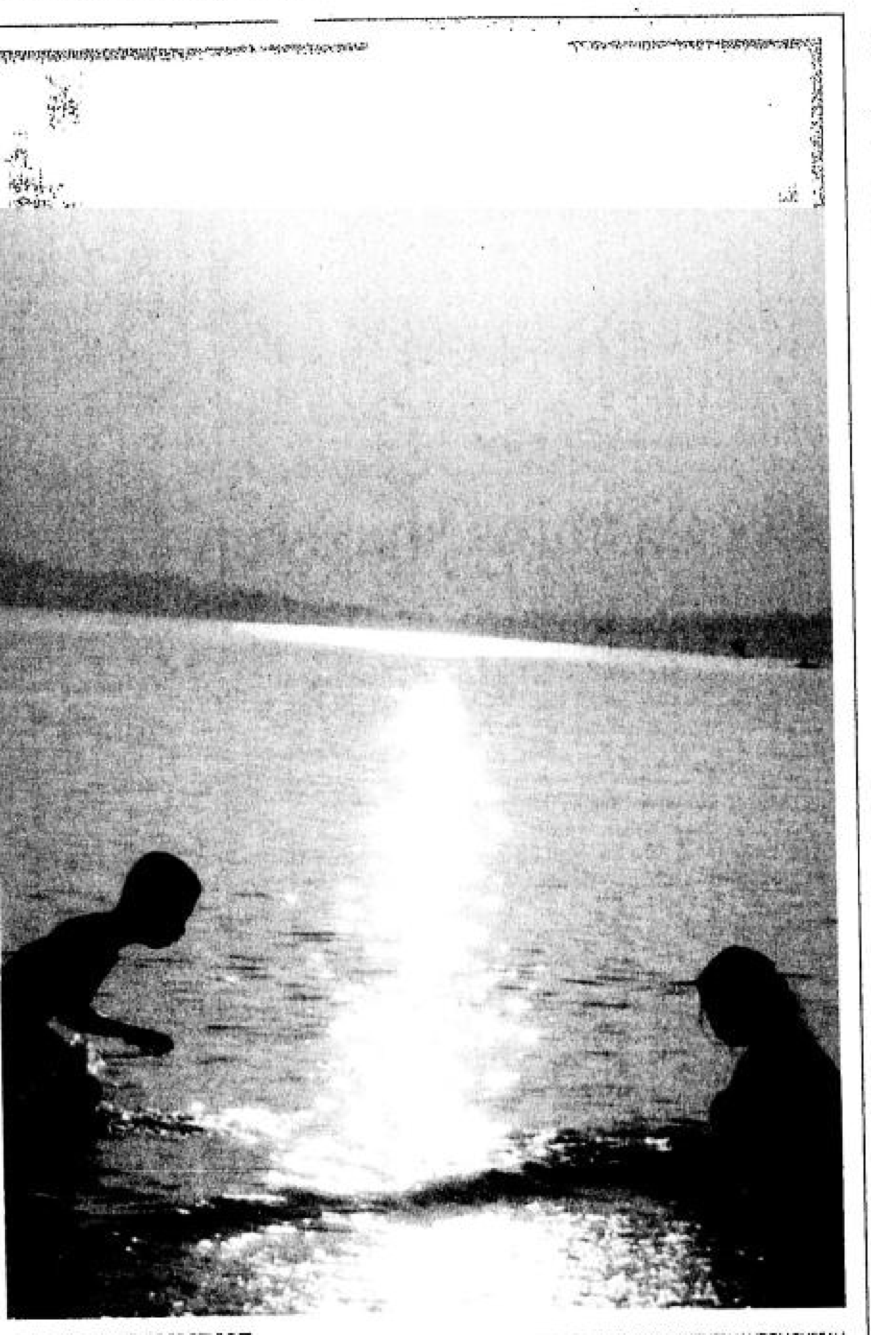
The number went down by 6 percent, compared to 35,630 enrollees for school year 2003-04 when eight colleges and universities asked for an adjustment in tuition.

Under CHEd Memorandum Order No. 18, the commission would only disapprove the application for a tuition increase if the school failed to comply with the requirements.

One of these is a dialogue between the management and the students regarding the issue.

Moreover, the increase should not be beyond 10 percent. Any increase should go to salaries of school personnel and to the improvement of school facilities.

The CHEd can nullify increases being sought by schools and file charges against their administrators if they pushed through with the adjustments even if they failed to meet the requirements.



CALAPAN SUNRISE JOFELLE TESORIO/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Morning walks and dives are not complete without the sunrise beaming from the coastline of Anahaw Beach Resort in Calapan City, Oriental Mindoro.

CPP assails 'apologists' for silence on killings

CALAMBA CITY—The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) has assailed professor and economist Walden Bello and his group Akbayan for allegedly keeping mum on the recent spate of killings of activists and mass leaders identified with the communist group.

In the latest issue of Ang Bayan, the CPP's official organ, the group lashed out at its former members for supposedly being the "apologists" of President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration.

It also accused Bello's group of closely working with the military in vilifying the CPP and other cause-oriented groups identified with the Left.

Akbayan Rep. Etta Rosales shrugged off the CPP allegations as "malicious, ridiculous and deceitful."

"The CPP is talking out of ignorance. Even the House records would show that I myself filed two resolutions seeking an investigation on the attacks on Bayan Muna supporters (and other activists)" she told the INQUIRER in a mobile phone interview.

Rosales said she had, in fact, openly criticized the military for its supposed participation in the murder of activists linked to the CPP and its allied groups during street protests.

During the rallies, she said Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo thanked her for denouncing the military and supporting the investigations of the extrajudicial killings.

The CPP said Bello's "smear campaign against people's organizations" backed the persecution of activists allegedly perpetrated by the military.

It said Bello's statements in December last year, which linked Left-leaning groups like Bayan and Kilusang Mayo Uno to the CPP, has "the same objective" as the military's "Know The Enemy" documents.

"They both link these organizations to the revolutionary armed movement to justify their being targets of fascist attacks and the use of armed force against their leaders and members," the party said.

It said that despite its purported knowledge that the military was behind all the attacks and killings of activists, Akbayan "could only come up with a mild rebuke of the Arroyo regime for its failure to issue a 'categorical denunciation' and for its 'inaction to stop the killings.'"

The CPP also criticized Akbayan for its supposed silence on the "Knowing The Enemy" controversy.

The communist group noted that despite Akbayan being a self-proclaimed "Leftist organization," the group and its allied organizations was not mentioned in the "Knowing the Enemy" briefing documents.

Rosales, however, said Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano informed her that Akbayan was also included among the "enemies of the state" listed in the military documents.

A look at the "Know the Enemy" document showed that Akbayan and the associated group Partido ng Manggagawa were in fact listed as "rejectionist groups" of the communist movement.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Ifugao folk push bid to preserve culture, rice terraces

BANAUE, Ifugao—Cars came to a stop as passengers joined the villagers, local and foreign tourists to witness young and old Ifugao people wearing indigenous attire for a street dancing here on April 29.

Native gongs filled the air as the Ifugao held their 8th Imbayah Festival or noble people's feast in this town that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization declared a world heritage site in 1995.

"Even if I will die, our culture will remain forever," Jose Gahid, 36, of Barangay Ibayong, said.

This year's festival was sponsored by the municipal government, along with national government agencies and nongovernment organizations.

The event has been transformed into a town festival due to its significant role in preserving Ifugao culture and heritage.

"If Imbayah will no longer be held, naturally our culture will vanish, even the rice terraces since it was traditionally built because of our culture," Gahid, also a barangay official, said.

According to him, factors brought by development in the town, such as migration and the growing tourism industry, have affected the maintenance of the rice terraces by more then 1,000 farmers.

"Many old Ifugao spend their time with local and foreign tourists by allowing themselves to be photographed to earn income instead of tending to their farms and teaching their family on their culture," he said.

"While there are Ifugao migrating outside the town, many are left because those who are seeking outside jobs can no longer be accommodated here. But they will still come back," he said.

Gahid said migration was only a natural phenomenon because of the increasing number of families in the rice terraces.

He lamented the government's total log ban which has affected the woodcarving industry in many towns.

Woodcarving is a major source of livelihood among the Ifugao in 10 towns of the province—Mayoyao, Hingyon, Kiangan, Lagawe, Asipulo, Banaue, Lamut, Hungduan, Tinoc and Asipulo.

The provincial government, he said, has asked for an exemption from the ban.

Gahid also said that if the government continued to implement the log ban, many woodcarvers and other workers might venture into illegal trade such as marijuana farming. *Ben Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Alaminos folk hail festival a success

RESIDENTS of Alaminos City lauded the success of the "Amazing Race" event held in the pristine waters of the Hundred Islands National Park (HINP) on April 29.

They thanked the city government, led by Mayor Hernani Braganza, for its efforts to recapture and promote the beauty of the Hundred Islands through a series of sports activities.

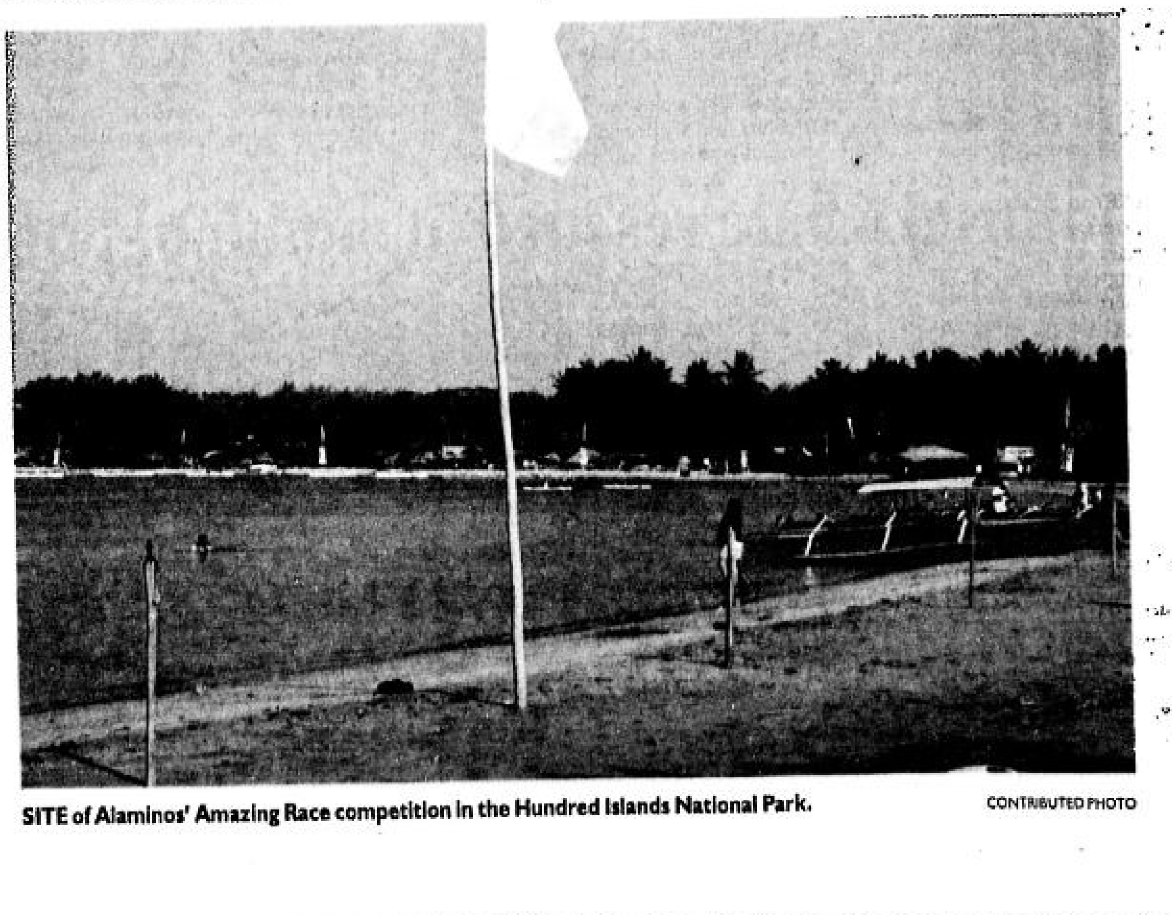
"We are back on the world map," they said in a statement sent by the mayor's office to the INQUIRER.

Libert Lomontod and Elaine Lerios, students of the University of Sto. Tomas in Manila, joined the "Amazing Race" competition and won third place. They vowed to come back and help boost the islands' ecotourism drive.

Thousands of foreign and local trekkers attended the week-long feast of the Hundred Islands from April 26 to May 1.

Investment offers poured in after the event, as the city government adopted crime prevention measures, the statement said.

"We have been here for so many times. We never forget to visit this place," it quoted a couple as saying.



SITE of Alaminos' Amazing Race competition in the Hundred Islands National Park. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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Handyman eyed in diplomat's slay

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE ALLEGED mastermind was the slain diplomat's handyman.

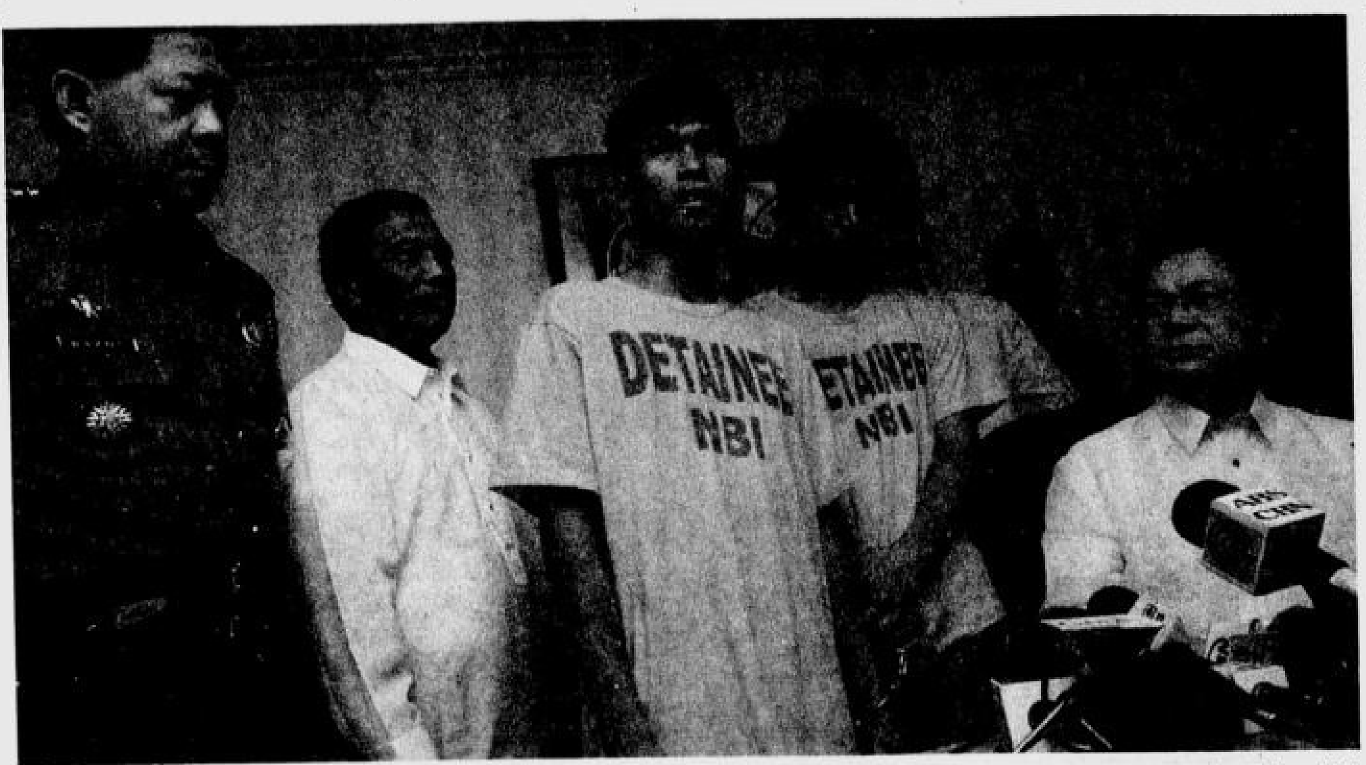
This was the confession of two suspects involved in the killing of Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Assistant Secretary Alicia Ramos in her Makati City home on April 24 who identified the family's handyman as the brains behind the incident.

Joel Ablay, 25, a pedicab driver of Laperal Street, Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City, and his cousin Michael Cenil, 21, of Barangay Laiya, Aplaya, San Juan, Batangas, said Roberto "Obet" Lumagui had convinced them to extort money from the victim.

Lumagui, of 1830 Dian St., Barangay Palanan, Makati City, was reportedly a childhood friend of a nephew of Alicia.

Another suspect, Jun Maricar, remains at large.

"Lumagui was often asked to do minor repairs in the Ramos household," said NBI National Capital Region Director Edmundo Arugay, adding that the Ramoses' fence had been built recently by Lumagui.



NBI DIRECTOR Reynaldo Wycoco (right), with Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay (second from left) and National Capital Region Police Office chief Deputy Director General Avelino Razon (left) present to media Joel Ablay and Michael Cenil, two of four suspects in the killing of DFA Assistant Secretary Alicia Ramos.

ERIK ARAZAS

Scare tactics

Cenil, who was arrested in Nasugbu, Batangas, on Sunday, said they did not mean to kill Alicia. "We just wanted to scare her into giving us P20,000," he said in a press conference yesterday. The diplomat had suffocated when they wrapped packaging tape around her face.

Cenil also revealed that during the three days the suspects planned the robbery, Lumagui kept referring to another "boss" who had advised him on how to threaten Alicia.

Wycoco added that Lumagui, who reportedly escaped to Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija, had expressed willingness to surrender to the authorities.

According to the suspects' signed statements, they climbed over the Ramoses' fence around 2 a.m. and waited until Alicia opened the front door four hours later. Wearing hoods, the suspects pounced on Alicia and dragged her to the second floor where they tied and gagged the elder Ramos with packaging tape.

Cenil and Ablay also tied Alicia's younger sister Leticia in her room located at the ground floor of the house. The suspects were gone when Leticia managed to untie herself at 7 a.m.

Southern Police District Director Chief Supt. Wilfredo Garcia said they had numerous statements from neighbors and other witnesses that would strengthen their case against the suspects.

An Olympus camera had been recovered from the suspects, and police are in the process of getting back other items taken from the Ramos house.

Leticia had declared that her sister's Rolex watch, an undetermined amount of jewelry, and two cellular phones were missing. The younger Ramos, however, did not declare any losses of her own, according to police.

The suspects were also presented yesterday for inquest at the Department of Justice.

Enough evidence

They are facing charges of robbery with homicide and frustrated homicide. State Prosecutor Manuel Velasco, who oversaw the inquest proceedings, said he believes there is enough evidence against the suspects based on Ablay's testimony.

Meanwhile, the DFA was "sincerely pleased" with the arrest of two suspects and identification of two others in the murder of Ramos, one of the country's top diplomats.

Hard work

In a statement, DFA acting Secretary Franklin Ebdalin commended the "hard work" of the NBI and the Philippine National Police, with the support of the Makati City government.

"We now leave the fate of the suspects and the other persons involved in this crime to our justice system, which, we are confident, will be swift in handing out judgment," he said.

"Our officers and staff pray that this development will give a large measure of peace and a great expectation of justice to the Ramos family and their friends," Ebdalin added.

At the time of her death, Ramos was the DFA Assistant Secretary for Asia and Pacific Affairs. *With reports from Nikko Dizon and Armand N. Nocum*

Debates on handling metro traffic continue

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority (MMDA) and the Makati City government continued their debate on who has authority to implement traffic rules.

"Only those deputized by the MMDA can enforce traffic rules, and apprehend and issue tickets to violators. Even a policeman in uniform (with) a gun could not... issue tickets," said MMDA chair Bayani Fernando in a press conference yesterday.

Fernando said only the agency's more than 2,500 traffic enforcers, and some 800 deputized officers of the Philippine National Police Traffic Enforcement Group, could enforce traffic rules.

With regard to traffic enforcement groups established by local governments of, among others, Makati, Pasay City, Navotas, and Pasig City, he said: "The local government units could no longer create their own traffic rules and have traffic enforcers... Only one agency (is) mandated to manage traffic in Metro Manila."

Fernando said the Supreme Court's decision recognized the MMDA as the only agency that should establish a single-ticketing system in Metro Manila.

He was referring to a recent high court decision upholding a lower court's decision barring MMDA from confiscating licenses of traffic violators.

The MMDA chair said the agency's charter, approved in 1995, gave it the power to install and administer a single ticketing system. He added the MMDA charter was approved four years after the 1991 Local Government Code granting the autonomy that local governments were now invoking.

But the Makati City government said the Supreme Court decision actually stripped MMDA of powers to implement traffic rules.

The agency could ask local governments to deputize MMDA enforcers, in keeping with the law, according to Hermenegildo San Miguel, chief of Makati's Department of Public Safety.

Mandaluyong City Mayor Neptali Gonzales II agreed MMDA should just ask local governments to deputize its traffic enforcers.

Gonzales added that, since the agency had no legislative powers, it should just implement traffic ordinances set by local governments. *With Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*

Reward up for leads to couple's killing

By Luige A. del Puerto

A CHINESE-FILIPINO group has put up a P100,000 reward for anyone who could lead the police to the men who robbed and killed a couple in Quezon City last week.

"The killing was senseless," declared lawyer Daniel Laogan, spokesperson of the Chinese Filipino Business Club. "You know what the couple left behind? A one-year-old child," he said.

Two men gunned down Ephraim and Wendalyn Yao-Young in broad daylight on Araneta Avenue last week in Quezon City.

The couple was on board a silver Honda CRV approaching E. Rodriguez Avenue when two men, armed with .45-cal. pistols, shot them. A witness said that Wendalyn had even raised her arms as a sign of surrender, but the suspect still shot her in the back. They then took a black bag held by Ephraim.

Laogan said they "feel unsafe" because of the spate of killings in Metro Manila and in other parts of the country, citing the murders of media men in the provinces.

He said Rufino Kopio, the club's president, had urged PNP chief Director General Arturo Lomibao to be more aggressive in his anticrime efforts.

"We're alarmed by the killings. Imagine this happened in broad daylight in a crowded area," Laogan said. "If they could do this to the (Yao-Young couple), they could do this to anyone."

He added that if the these killings are not stopped, residents may wake up to a lawless Metro Manila one day.

Reached for comment, police spokesperson Senior Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil said the police have been "relentless in their crime prevention and solution."

"*Halos hindi po natutulog ang mga pulis ninyo* (Your policemen have little sleep)," he said.

Bataoil said it may be just the perception of some that Metro Manila is unsafe.

Citing police records, he said the crime rate in Metro Manila actually went down during the first quarter of this year.

On your way to lipo clinic? Hold on

By Philip C. Tubeza

BETTER hold your breath and tuck in that bulging tummy.

Akbayan party-list Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales yesterday called for a moratorium on cosmetic surgery after a woman died last week from complications after a breast enhancement operation.

Rosales said a moratorium should be imposed on cosmetic operations like liposuction while Congress discusses a bill that would set regulations for these popular procedures that sometimes lead to the "unfortunate loss of lives."

She said the moratorium would not include reconstructive surgery arising from accidents.

Rosales issued the call after entertainer Gleceria Tan died on May 5 after undergoing a breast augmentation operation.

"We have reason to believe that similar botched operations may have gone on in the past, even if they did not result in deaths," she said.

"But we must look into the cosmetic and surgery business and find ways to ensure that those who go through these types of procedures are well aware of the risks they face," Rosales added.

Congress was interested to know what regulations are needed to ensure that cosmetic procedures are safe, the congresswoman said.

Tan died on Thursday after she was rushed to the hospital from Wally's Facial Center, Barangay San Isidro, Makati City after she suffered complications.

Police were told that she had undergone a similar procedure last year at the same clinic. *With Franco Emman von Cena, trainee*

2 suspects, cop die in NLEX rob

By DJ Yap

TERROR gripped a Cubao-bound bus yesterday after a robbery along the North Luzon Expressway erupted into a bloody shootout, leaving three people dead.

Killed was one off-duty policeman, who engaged the robbers in a gun battle, police said.

Two other men, believed to be members of the robbery group, were also killed.

Stray bullets

Some passengers were hurt by stray bullets and brought to hospital. Police did not identify them, however.

Four armed men declared a hold-up on a Victory Liner bus shortly after 1:00 p.m , just as the bus reached San Simon, Pampanga, driver Francisco Perez told police.

The suspects took the valuables of the 46 passengers, as well as the bus' earnings, police said. It was not immediately determined how much was taken by the robbers.

In civilian attire

Just then, PO2 Rodel Villalon, in civilian attire, shot at the suspects. He managed to kill two of the armed men before being shot dead himself, police said.

The bus reportedly continued on its journey to Quezon City before the remaining suspects got off upon reaching Edsa-Muñoz, police said.

Way to lick 'jueteng'

THE KEY to unmasking "jueteng" financiers is the continuous filing of cases against collectors, according to a legal officer at the Northern Police District.

Supt. Edgar Paulino said the nonstop filing of cases against arrested collectors "could break them and (make them squeal) on their bosses."

Paulino said the shakedown of bet collectors and *cabos* could lead to the identification of operators of the illegal numbers game.

Suspects were usually released a few hours after paying a fine.

Under Presidential Decree No. 1602, first-time offenders were fined from P1,600 to P6,000.

Repeat offenders had to pay P5,000-P10,000. *Nancy C. Carvajal*

Gold rush in Manay, Davao Oriental

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THERE was a reported gold rush in Manay, Davao Oriental, my hometown.

Over the weekend, I went to check the reports. From Mati, the capital town, I rode tandem on a mountain bike on a gravelly, narrow former logging road to Sitio Kalinawan. From Kalinawan, I trekked for two and a half hours up a mountain trail that sometimes sloped about 75 degrees. There was no way to reach the gold rush site from Manay town proper.

It was the hardest mountain trek I've ever made in my life. I've made treks in mountains inside the former Subic Naval Base, in Zambales, in Palawan and Mindoro Oriental to hunt wild animals. But the climb to Kalinawan beat them all. I still wonder how I managed to reach the site. I kept resting because I was dizzy and panting, given my hospital stint the week before.

What did I find? Plenty.

I was able to see for myself that there was frenetic activity at the gold rush site. About 3,000 small miners have dug up 200 dogholes that would make tunnels. If the government doesn't put in place a mining plan in Kalinawan, there will be big trouble when the crisscrossing tunnels strike a gold vein.

The average yield per ton of dug ore in Kalinawan is 70 to 100 grams. An ore is gravel embedded with gold.

In contrast, the average yield per ton of ore in Mt. Diwalwal in nearby Compostela Valley province is only eight grams per ton. This indicates, according to a government mining official who was with me, that Kalinawan at this point produces high-grade ore.

I found that there were 28 ball mills (drums that process ore into gold using mercury). The 28 ball mills process an average of 30 tons of ore a day, I was told.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources seems blind to the impending destruction of the environment in Kalinawan. Miners were felling trees left and right at the site to make trusses for the tunnels. There were reported fish kills in the Casawman river downstream because some miners used cyanide in processing ore.

Big mining firms that destroyed Mt. Diwalwal, like Blucor and Helica Group, are now in the area. This is another indication that a big quantity of gold lies in the bosom of Kalinawan.

Blucor and Helica allegedly destroyed Mt. Diwalwal's ecosystem.

Candido Balunos, representing Blucor, was seen in the area. He was expected to talk with the inhabitants of Kalinawan who are lumad belonging to the Mandaya tribe.

Most worthwhile mentioning here is the participation of Jaypet Palma Gil, son of Gov. Elena Palma Gil; Board Member Dodo Miones; and Primo Lumando, president of the Association of Barangay Captains (ABCs) in the Kalinawan gold rush.

In fact, Palma Gil, Miones and Lumando have the biggest makeshift ball mill factories at the site.

When Gov. Palma Gil issued an order on April 15 stopping mining operations in Kalinawan, her son's ball mills—as well as those of Miones and Lumando, reportedly her henchmen—never stopped grinding.

An indication that Palma Gil is about to hog the management of the gold rush site is the exclusion of Manay Mayor Manolo Dayanghirang from Task Force Kalinawan that she formed. Dayanghirang has a say in running the site because Kalinawan is in his town.

Already, greed seems to be rearing its ugly head in Kalinawan.

Stress, a big contributor to Hyperacidity

By KATRINA PRIMAVERA

NO NEWS is good news. Distressing current events may not only cause your blood pressure to shoot up but it may also be a reason for your acids to act up. Stress is but one of the many factors that contribute to hyperacidity. Smoking, physical exertion, irregular eating habits, dramatic weight gain, lying down too soon after a meal and pregnancy hormones are also common causes of a hyperacidity attack. Hyperacidity happens when there is an excessive secretion of acid in the stomach. It is not a disease but rather a collection of symptoms, including discomfort or burning in the upper abdomen which may also cause nausea. For relief from these discomforts, the most common over-the-counter remedy is an antacid.

Different terms and varying degrees of hyperacidity

HYPERACIDITY, locally known as *pangangasim ng sikmura*, is the excessive secretion of hydrochloric acid in the stomach. This imbalance causes a burning sensation or a slight churning in the stomach, which could also involve the esophagus and part of the small intestines.

Peptic ULCERS: refer to actual open sores or "wounds" in the inner lining of the stomach or small intestine or esophagus. Many ulcers result in a gnawing pain in the stomach and are caused by a bacteria called H. pylori. Other causes or factors which may aggravate ulcers include long term use of certain pain relievers, smoking, excessive alcohol consumption and stress.

If previous pages caused hyperacidity, this page can take it out

While over-the-counter medications may relieve the pain of ulcers, a doctor should be consulted so that proper treatment directed at healing the ulcer can be started.

INDIGESTION ("dyspepsia"). This is a general term often used to describe a collection of uncomfortable abdominal symptoms which often occur after eating. The cause of indigestion can't be attributed to one particular thing and is often times not serious. This includes discomfort or burning in the upper abdomen, nausea and a bloated feeling that belching may relieve. This can stem from a temporary problem such as overeating or a stressful event rather than relating it to a disease. It is a common disorder of the upper gastrointestinal system which includes the esophagus, stomach and the first part of the small intestine. The proper diet, exercise, stress management and anti-acid medications can all help with the symptoms.

HEARTBURN. When the lower sphincter valve of the esophagus relaxes or is weak, stomach acid can flow back up into the esophagus and irritate the esophagus resulting in "heartburn". The sensation is similar to regurgitation while experiencing a sour taste in the mouth and leaving a burning sensation behind the breastbone. Acid regurgitation or reflux can even cause hoarseness of the voice , coughing, and worsening of asthma.

TREATMENT. For quick acid neutralization, New Mylanta Rolltabs (CALCIUM CARBONATE + MAGNESIUM HYDROXIDE). Mylanta Rolltabs comes in chewable and great tasting flavors to aid in the rapid neutralization of acid to start relief in seconds. It's portable and comes in different flavors giving you sweet relief in no time, anytime. Don't forget to consult your doctor if symptoms persist, are severe, or keep recurring. Some of the things which may aggravate or result in heartburn: Stress, smoking, tight clothing, physical exertion, weight gain, lying down too soon after a meal and pregnancy.

Hyperacidity Tales

" I love coffee. I used to have 7-10 cups a day. Thing is with coffee, I would lose my appetite and end up skipping meals so I would get the worst hyperacidity attacks. I would feel as if there was this big ball burning inside my tummy." -Paul, 25

"Grabe ang hyperacidity ko. Pasulpot sulpot na lang. Para sa akin dumarating na lang yan ng walang warning. May isang beses naglalakad lang ako sa daan tapos may naramdaman akong sakit na biglaan sa tiyan. Ang tindi at ang lakas ng tama, napaupo ako sa daan bigla." -Lawrence, 24

"Ang pinakamatindi kong hyperacidity attack ay nung kumain ako ng manggang hilaw sa umaga. Hindi pa ako nag-aalmusal, so wala pang laman tiyan ko. Ay ang sakit talaga." -Mia, 24

" Hyperacidity is such a hassle. The worst part about it is that you never know when it's gonna hit you. There was this one time I was out with my girl friends and started getting spasms in my stomach. At first, I thought it was just gas or something I ate but the pain got worse as I was having my drinks. So not only did I have to pass up on the drinks, the pain became unbearable so I went home and missed out on what would have been a perfectly good night out." -Karen, 35

"I would get acidic once in a while but for some reason, it's more frequent and more intense during exam week. Things are a little bit more busy at that time. I like to go out kasi. Hanging with the boys and spending time with my girlfriend so tendency is for me to study last minute. I think the

CONT...

cramming and the pressure just aggravates my hyperacidity. Stress, you know?" -Joey 17,

"Hindi ako familiar sa mga sakit na ganyan. Basta iniisip ko lagi, lilipas lang yan. Pero may isang beses na nakaranas ako ng sakit sa tiyan. Ay, kakaiba talaga. Hindi ko siya maipinta. Parang may mainit at mahapding bulateng umiikot sa loob ng tiyan ko. Sinubukan kong itulog pero sa tindi ng sakit, hindi ako makatulog. Akala ko nagkaka-dysmenorrhea na ko , pero sus, hyperacidity pala siya" -Tiffany, 24

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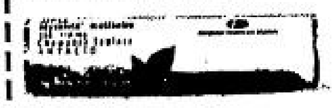

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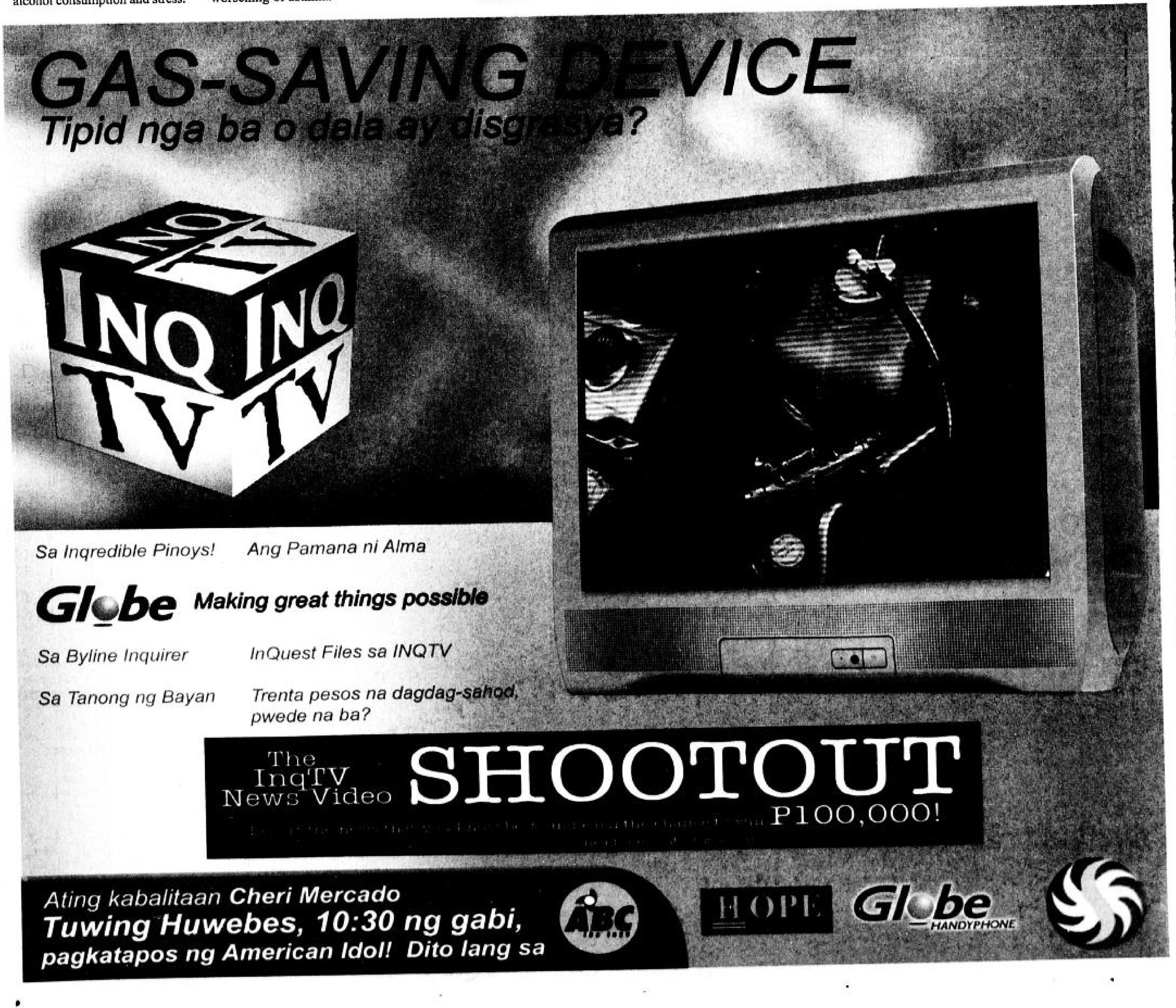
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SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Mangulat

TENNIS: ATP Hamburg Masters; 9 p.m. and 11 p.m.; STAR Sports - Catch this tune-up for the French Open.

BASKETBALL: NBA Playoffs - Pacers vs Pistons, Game 1; 8 a.m.; Mavs vs Suns, Game 1; 10:30 a.m.; Solar Sports - Indiana and Detroit renew their war while Dallas takes on Phoenix.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

BAP defies Peping on nat'l five

By Musong R. Castillo

LITERAL: Not mine

FINALLY asserting its autonomy, the Basketball Association of the Philippines, through its executive board, yesterday stuck to its earlier decision to field its own team for the Southeast Asian Basketball Association (Seaba) tournament with Boycie Zamar as head coach.

While welcoming the help of other major basketball stakeholders in reinforcing the national five, the BAP said Zamar has been given authority to select his own coaching and training staff assisted by five former cage standouts.

These were the two salient features approved during the board meeting attended by 19 BAP officials headed by president Tiny Literal, who disowned a previous statement attributed to him in which he allegedly assured Philippine Olympic Committee Jose "Peping" Cojuangco of full support for a resolution giving the POC basketball committee a free hand to form national teams for the Seaba and the Southeast Asian Games.

The basketball committee, formed after the BAP-organized national five was humbled by a selection of former pros and movie stars, enjoyed full support from the PBA and the PBL, with Cojuangco tapping coach Chot Reyes of the Asian championship-bound national team to handle the formation of a new Seaba five.

A copy of the minutes of the meeting was sent to the Inquirer yesterday by Graham Lim, the BAP secretary-general who is facing deportation charges.

The board also withdrew Go's appointment as project director of the 2007 Asian Basketball Confederation championships. Go was given the crucial post supposedly due to his close friendship with Fiba (world basketball federation) president Carl Ching Menky.

Joey Romasanta, spokesman for Cojuangco, refused to answer calls yesterday.

Meanwhile, members of the BAP-formed RP five snubbed their first public appearance under coach Chot Reyes, who has been designated by the basketball committee to handle the formation of the Seaba squad.

Amateurs KG Canaleta, Dennis Madrid, BJ Manalo and the 6-foot-9 Samigue Eman missed the tune-up game featuring the national team aspirants. Reyes gave them one week to attend succeeding practice sessions or they will be dropped from the RP pool.

But BAP legal counsel Bonifacio Alentajan said Reyes' group had reneged on a previous agreement that the formation of the Seaba team would be jointly created by officials of the BAP and the PBA-backed national squad.

"We didn't receive any invitation; he has to coor-

BAP/ A22

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PBA Fil-Ams aching to rejoin RP five tryouts

By Francis Ochoa

CONSIDERED as not Filipinos by the Philippine Basketball Association's board of governors and forced out of the shelter of their mother teams, a handful of Filipino-Americans have found a haven to prove their citizenship—the national training pool.

"I am a Filipino," said Shell forward Tony dela Cruz. "One of my highest aspirations is to represent my country."

"It's still a dream to represent the Philippines," said Danny Seigle of San Miguel Beer.

Their declarations came amid fears that the suspended Fil-Ams, who are part of the training pool, would boycott the tryouts of the RP team, using their current predicament as a reason.

"We were just misconstrued by some people," Dela Cruz said. "[Boycotting the national team] never even crossed our minds."

"Even if we wanted to make a stand, [walking out of the RP

PBA/ A22

In-form Jones snaps Mikola's Asian F3 streak

JONES: Good win.

GUANGDONG, China—Defending champion Christian Jones of Australia finally outshone Indonesian rival Ananda Mikola by ruling the fourth leg of the 2005 Asian Formula Three series here Sunday.

The Christian Jones Motorsports lead driver negotiated the wet Zhuhai International Circuit in 20 minutes and 29.224 seconds to finally put his bid back on track after Mikola swept the first three legs, including two in Batangas last month.

"It's a good win, I couldn't be more happier," said Jones, son of one-time Formula One champion Alan Jones, who started third on the grid and overtook Mikola at the first corner after the red lights went off.

Mikola, driving for Fastron Racing with Threebond, settled for second place after ruling Saturday's third leg, clocking 20:34.929 in what he described as a "safe run."

Mikola still leads the overall race with 75 points going into rounds fifth and sixth of the series next month also in Zhuhai. Jones is in second place with 62 points.

Filipino Tyson Sy, 17, of Speedtech Asia, made the biggest turnaround in Sunday's race, driving from last on the starting grid to finish third in 20:38.632.

Sy busted the engine of his car in qualifying Saturday and failed to start for the third leg.

Dado Peña, who finished second in the third leg, was kept out of the podium Sunday, finishing sixth after a collision with compatriot Pepon Marave, the 2003 overall champion and Greg Murphy of Ireland.

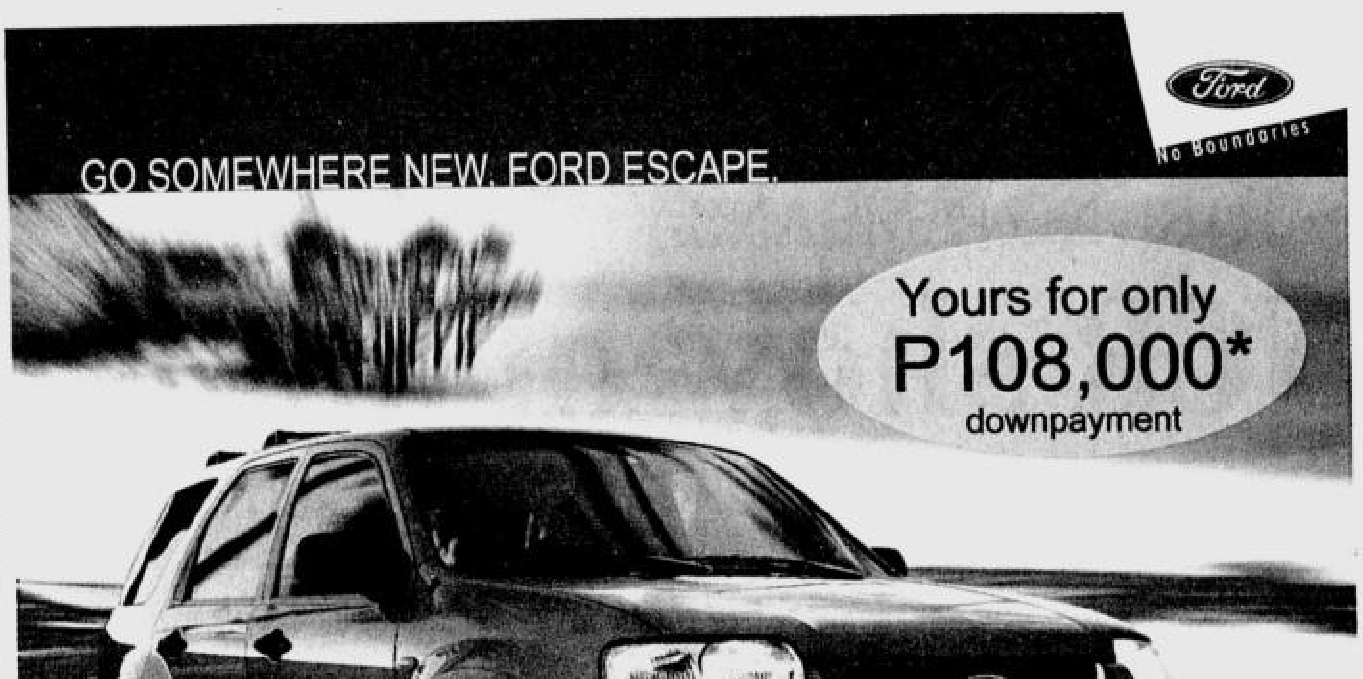
Peña, of Ambi Pur Team Goddard-Minardi Team Asia, still made it to the finish, along with Marave who finished fifth behind AF3 newcomer Lee Farrell of Ireland, driving for Shell Helix Kinetic PCSO.

Farrell emerged as the Promotions class winner for cars built with chassis in 1999 and older.

Murphy, of Ambi Pur Team Goddard-Minardi, claimed second in the Promotions class while JP Tuason of the Philippines, of the Tuason Racing School, salvaged third.

Tuason finished second in the class last Saturday but was disqualified due to a faulty air box.

Enzo Pastor, also of the Philippines, was 10th in 21:41.263 while Renan Morales was disqualified after running with a gas leak.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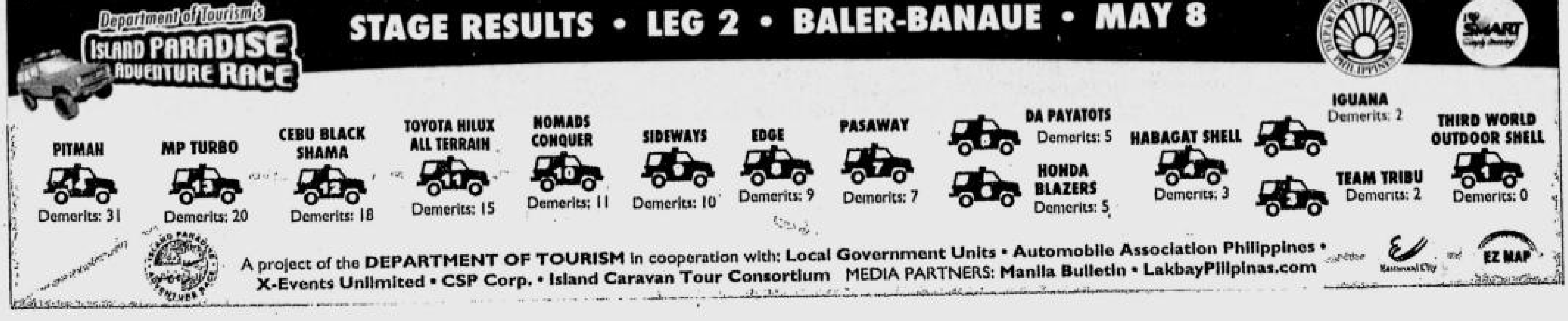
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HONDA BLAZERS	5
HABAGAT SHELL	3
IGUANA	2
TEAM TRIBU	2
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TWO-Shell grabs lead in Adventure Race

By Jasmine W. Payo

BANAUE—As darkness loomed over the scenic Banaue Rice Terraces, Third World Outdoor-Shell emerged as the new leader in Day 2 of the Island Paradise Adventure Race here in Ifugao on Sunday.

Driving a red Toyota Prado, Lolong Velasquez, Sonni Mendoza and Dindo Sugatan incurred no demerit point in the second pit stop to lead 14 teams vying for the P1 million grand prize in the Luzon leg of the tough nine-day, 2,000-km auto rally.

"We're actually one of the older teams here," said the 37-year-old Velasquez, after his crew became the first to finish with a perfect score. "We took our time, we paced ourselves. We did technical computations to be sure that we arrive in every checkpoint at the right time."

TWO-Shell finished the race stage, flagged off in Sabang Beach, Aurora province, in eight hours and 59 minutes.

Veteran racers Andrew Chinalpan, Orville Bernabe and Dennis Ararao of Team Iguana had the same time in their Nissan Frontier, but settled for second place after incurring two demerit points.

Team Tribu—composed of brothers Jerome and Jason Luengo and cousin Renante Luengo—also had two demerit points to take third place in their Dodge Dakota in 9:01.

Organized by the Department of Tourism, the race requires participants to drive through different destinations at a prescribed time and hurdle various physical and mental challenges along the way. Teams are slapped with demerit points for any time delay or failure to complete a task correctly.

Some of the activities on Day 2 were the carabao-milking challenge at the Central Luzon State University in Muñoz town and rappelling at the Pantabangan Dam, both in Nueva Ecija, and the head-basket challenge at the Balete Pass Tourism Center in Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya.

But for Third World Outdoor-Shell, competing with the younger teams is the least of its worries.

"We're all outdoors people," said Velasquez. "We're full-time mountaineers and we've also been organizing races. So except for the carabao challenge, we didn't really have a hard time."

A MEMBER of Team Iguana rappels down Pantabangan Dam in Nueva Ecija. MELO VILLAREAL

CARLYN Bag of Region 12 (674) crosses the finish the winner of the 110m hurdles trials in the Palaro at the Iloilo Sports Complex. JESS YUSON

Brilliant Jewels, Paint Masters eye crucial wins

MONTAÑA clashes with Bacchus today, seeking a second straight win in a bid to secure the first outright semifinal slot in the PBL Unity Cup at the Pasig Sports Center.

Gametime is 4 p.m. with the odds even. Jewels ace Alex Compton is a doubtful starter for the second straight outing because of a right ankle sprain.

"We will have to come out with a lot of energy if we want an outright (semifinal) spot," said Montaña coach Robert Sison.

The Jewels are fresh off a 76-61 win over Magnolia, the struggling defending champion, even with Compton out of the lineup after twisting his ankle in a losing cause against Granny Goose last month.

A win by the Jewels would leave them with two chances to make the Final Four phase ahead of the pack.

There are only three other teams in the running and Welcoat, denied of a share of the lead by the Toyota Otis-Letran on Saturday, will try to gain the inside track when it collides with Granny Goose at 2 p.m.

Idle Harbour Centre and the Knights are the other two teams in contention for the outright berth.

Montaña started strong with six straight wins that included a lopsided victory over Bacchus, only to see that streak come to an end with that loss to the Kornets. Musong Castillo

STANDINGS	W	L
Montaña	7	1
Harbour	6	2
Welcoat	6	2
Toyota Otis	5	3
Granny G.	3	5
Magnolia	3	5
Bacchus	2	6
Nenaco	0	8

GAMES TODAY *(Pasig Sports Center)*

2 p.m.—Granny Goose vs. Welcoat

4 p.m.—Bacchus vs. Montaña

PALARONG PAMBANSA

NCR show of might

By Marc Anthony Reyes

ILOILO CITY—National Capital Region dominated gymnastics and picked up a fourth gold in athletics to underscore its overall might at the start of the Palarong Pambansa yesterday at the sun-baked Iloilo Sports Complex here.

Western Visayas, NCR's perennial championship rival, won two golds in athletics while Calabarzon (Cavite-Laguna-Batangas-Rizal-Quezon) nailed the last gold disputed in the first full day of action in this revival of the annual competition among the country's top elementary and secondary athletes.

The Big City athletes, bannered by gymnasts fresh from the Manila Youth Games, snared three gold medals in rhythmic gymnastics, two by 13-year-old Rachellyn Astillar of Barrio Obrero in the rope and ball events.

Rizza Desiree Garcia, who placed second to Astillar in both events, triumphed in the hoop event where Rachellyn settled for the silver.

Elizza dela Cruz bagged the bronze in all three events.

Ronjie Abing triumphed in the secondary boys' javelin for NCR's fourth gold. The junior high school student at the St. Francis of Assisi College in Las Piñas flung the spear to 47.41 meters on his fourth attempt, beating Bicol's Florante Dorongon Jr. (46.67m) and Western Visayas' Pido Gustil (46.42m).

Western Visayas momentarily held the overall lead after snaring two of the first four golds disputed in the morning events until the NCR onslaught in gymnastics came in the afternoon.

Christine Olaira of Bago City highlighted her first Palaro stint with a golden throw of 30.11 meters in secondary girls' javelin, way off the 32.79m which she attained in the regional championship.

"I'm very thankful that I was able to compete and win the gold medal," said the 16-year-old Olaira, a former softball pitcher.

Angelica Lado of Central Visayas was second (30.0m) and Lornalyn Alonzo of Ilocos third (29.05m).

San Carlos City's Janette Bayalas put away the second gold for WV in the girls' shot put with a heave of 9.56m. The 13-year-old Bayalas offered her victory to her ailing father, Teodoro.

Jenna Malinao of Calabarzon (9.00m) and Jonalyn Dela Cruz Bicol (8.90m) settled for the silver and bronze, respectively.

Kaycee Maala, a senior at the Feliciano Leviste National HS in Batangas, struck for Calabarzon in high jump, clearing 1.58m to win the gold over Region 9's Charito Gajuyo (1.56m) and WV's Mitchell Faye Pabulayan (1.53m).

SPORTS PARTNERS: Executives of Globe Telecom and adidas Phils. sign an agreement making Globe the official telecom partner and co-presenter of all adidas sports events for 2005. From left, Globe head of product marketing for wireless business Ma. Concepcion C. Alcedo, Globe head of wireless business Ferdinand M. dela Cruz, adidas Phil. president and managing director John Alonte and adidas marketing director Angelica Suiza.

PBA Fil-Ams aching to rejoin tryouts

From page A21

pool] would not be the best way to do it," Seigle added. "If we really wanted to prove we are Filipinos, what better way to do it than to fight for the right to represent the country?"

And Chot Reyes, the RP squad's taskmaster, believes that.

"They started calling me around midnight and said they would play [in the pocket tournament]," Reyes said. "I have no reason to doubt that they will show up in the practices."

San Miguel Beer coach Jong Uichico, whose big man Dorian Peña is also among the pool's Fil-Ams, said the 6-foot-5 forward-center was not going to miss the tryouts.

"They (Seigle and Peña) will attend practices," Uichico said.

"We will show up," Dela Cruz said. "As far as I'm concerned, if there's a practice, if there's a game, if there's as much as a simple function where I have to show up for the national pool, I will show up."

Meanwhile, Dela Cruz said he is currently working on the final piece of the requirements needed to lift his suspension and hopes to suit up for Shell on Friday.

Uichico said Seigle and Peña's documents are already in order and San Miguel Beer is just awaiting stamps that will certify their papers as copies of the original document.

BAP defies Peping . . .

From page A21

dinate with us," said Alentajan, denying that the BAP has instructed its players to keep off the training pool facilitated by the group of Reyes.

Alentajan said Reyes should have consulted with the BAP's technical committee composed of Zamar and Fritz Gaston before going about the day-to-day functions of the RP pool.

Even without the members of the former Cebuana-Lhuillier RP squad, the tune-up game between the national team aspirants pools A and B proceeded as usual, with the Pool A winning over Pool B, 73-69.

"It's a team policy that if a player can't attend practice sessions, he should at least notify the coaching staff," said Reyes. *With a report from June Navarro*

ORGANIZERS and backers of the Samsung Amateur Tour get together. Seated, from left: PSMG's Boy Blue Ocampo, Samsung president Shim Hyuck Jae, Ogie Manalo of Federation of Golf Clubs and Laurent Lamasuta. Standing, same order: Jojo Jabines of Coppertone, Samsung marketing head Angie Limbaco, Babeth Sarmiento of Summit Point, Albert Garcia of C-Lium Fibre, Mike Cedo of Northwoods, Roy Martin of Microtel.

Four new venues tapped for Samsung Tour golf

FOUR debuting championship venues, two of them new creations by the eminent Robert Trent Jones Jr., will add a new, exciting dimension to the 2005 Samsung Amateur Golf Tour.

At yesterday's launch of the country's only gross play series for various handicap levels, Samsung Phils. president Spencer Shim said the chance to sample the new courses is among the many things golfers can look forward to in this year's tour.

Way before the scheduled openings of their 18-hole courses, Ayala Greenfield Estates in Laguna and Summit Point Golf and Country Club in Lipa City have already agreed to host the Samsung Tour.

"This is going to be one Samsung Tour that even the regular campaigners in the previous years will find hard to miss," Shim said. "It's full of new adventures and a couple of courses to discover."

Shim graced the launch together with Boy Blue Ocampo of the organizing Professional Sports Management Group and representatives of the co-sponsors of the Tour—Tokyo Tokyo, KZG, Microtel, Coppertone Sport, Srixon, Philippine Airlines, Sunbolt, Rudy Project, C-Lium Fiber and Sports Plus. Media partners are Wave 89.1, Jam 88.3, 89.9, 99.5 RT. 103.5 K-Lite and Killer Bee.

The Tour kicks off at the Royal Northwoods Golf Club in Bulacan on May 31.

Unpredictable

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

WATER and putter. They conspired to make Sergio Garcia a loser yesterday in the Wachovia (pronounced *wakovyah*) Championship in Charlotte, North Carolina.

First, the Spaniard drowned his tee shot into the pond guarding the 17th green. Bogey. That cost him a one-stroke lead with a hole left.

Second, Garcia three-putted from 40 feet two holes later—on the first playoff hole on 18—costing him the crown that had looked his at the start of the day.

Has the ghost of that collapse suffered by Greg Norman in the Masters sometime ago come back?

We all remember that.

Greg Norman was seven shots ahead of Nick Faldo with 18 holes left. They were in the twosome championship flight, the last to tee off, of course. Before sunset, Faldo had won his third Masters, including his back-to-back victories in 1989 and 1990.

After that debacle, Norman was the "Great White Shark" no more. In shame, he slid out of the limelight and, in no time, would become a mere blip in our memories.

I wish Sergio Garcia wouldn't be the next Greg Norman. He's too young to suffer the same fate. At 25, Garcia has the world for the taking.

OK, to those who missed yesterday's action on TV, here it is:

Garcia had a 6-shot lead with 18 holes to go.

With two holes left, the lead was one.

With one hole left, the lead was gone.

With the final round over, Garcia found himself tied after 72 holes with Vijay Singh and Jim Furyk.

Garcia, starting like a thoroughbred, finished like a non-pedigree dog. *"Askal"* by local standards.

He began the last round 12 under, finished the tournament 12 under.

Singh and Furyk were 6 shots behind Garcia with one round left. They fired final-round 66s to force the sudden-death playoff with Garcia, who struggled to rescue a 72.

Although he birdied two of the last five holes yesterday, Garcia bogeyed the par-3 17th after an errant tee shot barely hit the fringe, bouncing left and into the water.

Garcia still had a chance to win it, but he missed the winning birdie putt from 18 feet on 18.

And while Garcia got tossed by a roller-coaster ride in the last round, Singh's 66 included an eagle. And Furyk, the guy with the curling swing, birdied 16 and 18 to get to the playoff. Furyk's three on 18—from 7 feet and 6 inches—was only the fourth birdie on that hole for the tournament.

Golf being the most unpredictable of all sports, the three went into the playoff with contrasting playoff results and different flags.

Fiji's Singh, No. 2 in the world, was 6-2. Spain's Garcia, 9th in the world, was 3-1. America's Furyk, No. 26, was 1-4.

After the first playoff hole, Garcia was given the door, three-putting 18 from 40 feet. Singh two-putted for par. Furyk tapped in for par after a short wedge shot from the fringe.

Furyk missed winning it outright when he flubbed a 12-foot birdie putt on 16, the second playoff hole, after Singh missed his 30-foot birdie putt.

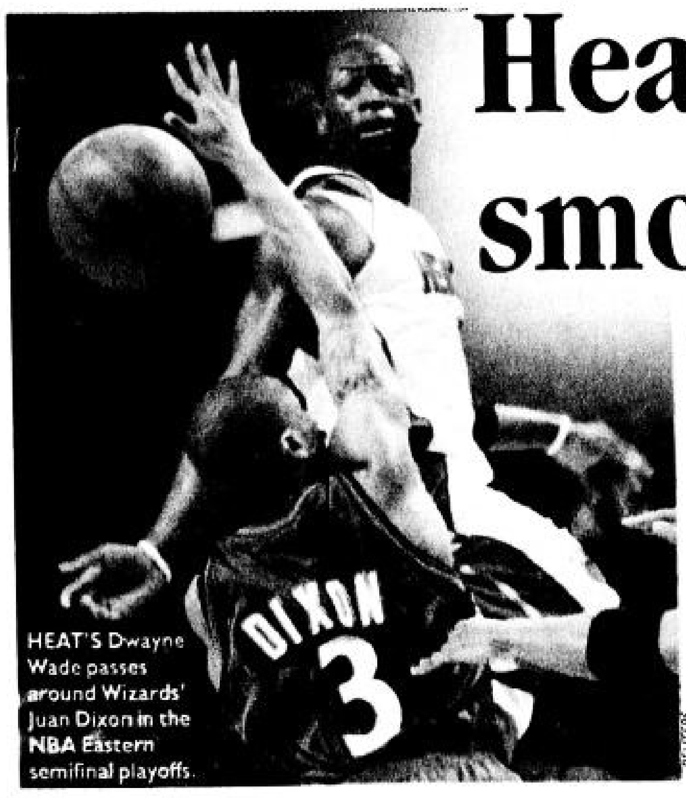
Again, Furyk missed a birdie from 10 feet on 17 that would have won it.

And then going back to 18 for the fourth playoff hole, Furyk blinked. He pulled his tee shot, the ball finding the water. Without a clear shot at the green, he played out, hoping Singh would miss his 6-iron from 180 yards. He did, Singh's approach finding the bunker. But after Furyk's fourth shot careened into the fringe after hitting the pin, Singh ended it with a bunker blast that stopped inches from the cup and secured his 27th career win.

But even before Vijay Singh could pocket his third victory in the same year that he was inducted into golf's Hall of Fame, Sergio Garcia had long retreated into the lockers—tarrying in the showers licking wounds only the game of golf is capable of inflicting.

The game of mistakes has struck again.

Heat torch Wizards; Spurs smother Sonics in playoffs



HEAT'S Dwayne Wade passes around Wizards' Juan Dixon in the NBA Eastern semifinal playoffs.

REUTERS

TORONTO—Dwyane Wade poured in 20 points and Shaquille O'Neal added 19 to put an MVP snub behind him as the Miami Heat beat the Washington Wizards 105-86 in Game One of their Eastern Conference semifinal in Florida on Sunday.

In the day's other playoff game in San Antonio, Tony Parker notched 29 points and Tim Duncan chipped in 22 as the Spurs drew first blood in their Western Conference semifinal, cruising to a 103-81 victory over the Seattle SuperSonics.

O'Neal finished a close second to Phoenix Suns point guard Steve Nash in balloting officially announced during the game, but the big center appeared unconcerned by the snub.

However, it took only a few moments before Heat fans voiced their displeasure at the news by chanting, "MVP." O'Neal also had seven rebounds in just 26 minutes of action before fouling out.

Keyon Dooling contributed a career-high 15 points on his 25th birthday while Eddie Jones added 13 for the Heat, who improved to 5-0 against the Wizards this season.

They will now try to take a 2-0 lead in the best-of-seven series when they host Game Two on Tuesday.

Gilbert Arenas had a game-high 25 points and six steals for the Wizards, who fell 0-2 behind the Chicago Bulls before rallying to sweep the next four games of their quarter-final series.

Larry Hughes added 23 for the Wizards while Antawn Jamison had 13 and Jared Jeffries and Brendan Haywood 10 apiece.

"We have a locker room full of guys who love a challenge," Hughes said. "We've been down before."

The Heat, who had not played for a week after a four-game quarter-final sweep of the New Jersey Nets, needed some time to find their rhythm.

Leading 49-47 at the intermission, the Heat took control in the third quarter, outscoring the Wizards 33-17 to surge ahead, 82-64.

After dropping Game One of their quarterfinal series to the Denver Nuggets, the Spurs made sure there would be no similar letdown against Seattle, taking charge from the opening tip-off and leading by 27 points at the half.

The Sonics played almost the entire contest without two of their key players when all-star guard Ray Allen and Vladimir Radmanovic went down in the first half with ankle injuries. *Reuters*

Singh outlasts Garcia, Furyk for title

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina—Fiji's Vijay Singh ran down Sergio Garcia then outlasted Garcia and Jim Furyk in a three-way playoff, winning the $5.6 million Wachovia Championship on the fourth hole of sudden death here Sunday.

Singh and Furyk had both erased a six-shot deficit in regulation, posting final-round 66s to join overnight leader Garcia on 276, Furyk booking his playoff berth with a birdie at the last hole.

Garcia managed only an even-par 72 in benign conditions, then fell by the wayside with a three-putt at the first extra hole.

Singh and Furyk then parred the next two holes, before Furyk pulled his drive into the creek along the fairway at the fourth playoff hole, the par-four 18th.

After a drop into deep rough, he got it back in the fairway then hit a superb fourth shot, which unluckily hit the pin and bounced away from the green, while Singh made an excellent shot out of a bunker and tapped in for par and his third PGA Tour victory of the year.

Chris DiMarco finished four shots behind in fourth place, while Phil Mickelson made a stunning charge before dropping three shots in his final two holes to tie for seventh, seven shots adrift.

The tournament was Garcia's to lose, and he offered no excuses after joining Greg Norman (1996 Masters), Bobby Cruickshank (1928 Florida Open), Gay Brewer (1969 Danny Thomas Classic) and Hal Sutton (1983 Anheuser-Busch Classic) as the only players to lose after taking a six-shot lead into the final round on the US tour.

SINGH

AFP

Singh, ranked second in the world, padded his lead at the top of the PGA Tour money list as he collected $1,080,000 for his 27th PGA Tour victory. He could afford to feel sympathy for Garcia.

Furyk noted that Garcia could have waltzed to victory if he'd putted better early in the round.

Tiger Woods's closing 71 included a two-stroke penalty for a rules infraction. Woods was penalized for moving a temporary immovable obstruction at the 10th hole, specifically a picket fence around a temporary bathroom station to the right of the fairway. He finished tied for 11th at 286. *AFP*

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Kerr stops Sorenstam

WILLIAMSBURG, Virginia—Christie Kerr cruised to a five-shot victory at the $2.2 million Michelob Ultra Open on Sunday as Swedish superstar Annika Sorenstam's LPGA winning streak ran out of steam.

Sorenstam entered the tournament seeking a record sixth consecutive victory.

But she never completely recovered from a first-round 76. Sorenstam bogeyed the opening hole of the last round, and any chance of a challenge ended with a double-bogey at the par-five third. She carded a final-round 74 for 286 - 10 shots behind Kerr.

Filipina Jennifer Rosales shot a 72 and finished tied for 20th to 25th places at 388. Rosales netted $23,556 (about P1.3 million). Fil-Am Dorothy Delasin soared to a 79 and a 299 total. *AFP*

Nadal prevails

ROME—Rafael Nadal won his third straight clay-court title Sunday by edging French Open runner-up Guillermo Coria 6-4, 3-6, 6-3, 4-6, 7-6 (6) at the Rome Maters in a match that ended in darkness and lasted more than five hours.

Nadal, who has won 17 straight matches, appeared exhausted and debilitated from blisters to his playing hand when he fell behind 0-3 in the fifth set. The 18-year-old Spaniard rallied for yet another victory, just as he fought back from first-set losses in his previous two matches. *AP*

Henin triumphs

BERLIN—Justine Henin-Hardenne doesn't want to hear that she's the French Open favorite—she just wants rest.

The Belgian remained unbeaten on clay this year and ran her winning streak to 17 matches by winning the German Open Sunday, a key tuneup for the Grand Slam event starting in two weeks.

The former No. 1 player, returning after a season plagued by a virus and knee injury, beat Russia's Nadia Petrova, 6-3, 4-6, 6-3, in the final. *AP*

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Race 4—1. Latin Success 2. Shining Speed 3. Harry Peak 4. Brutus 5. Strong Jays
Race 5—1. Air Florce One 2. Perfect Harry 3. Smile of the Wind 4. Overture
Race 6—1. Vice Free 2. Calvin's Magic 3. Cash McCall 4. Silver Dollar 5. American Music
Race 7—1. Pay to See 2. Juanito's Dream 3. Angle Red 4. Audrey's Temper
Race 8—1. La Española 2. Sniper 3. Vinia's Pride 4. Kevin's Choice 5. Marvelous Jay 6. Last Dance

NCA 7-Cock Derby today

FORMER pilot Boy Marzo, one of two champions in the 2005 World Slasher Cup first leg, will field four entries today in the National Cockers Association (NCA) 7-Cock Derby at the air-conditioned Araneta Coliseum. Marzo is co-host of today's event with JV Magsaysay of Zambales, Ruel Ricafort and lawyer Edgar Santos. More than 55 fights are lined-up in the qualifying round which will start at 5 p.m. The championship round (4-cock) is on Thursday.

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DID YOU KNOW...

Actress and Quezon City councilor Aiko **Melendez** was seen hanging out with her boyfriend, singer-theater actor **Jonard Yamson** in Greenbelt 2, Ayala Center Makati on Thursday night. They had a male companion.

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2	KINGDOM OF HEAVEN	11:00, 2:00, 5:00 8:00, 11:00 PG-13
3	THE INTERPRETER	12:05, 2:55, 5:45 8:35, 11:10 PG-13
4	GUESS WHO?	12:35, 3:10, 5:45 8:20, 10:50 PG-13

French resto party for Charlene

From page A28

to the mag for opening doors for her. Atta girl! IT girl!

FANNY Serrano

Fanny S

AS ONE of the Philippine's icons in the fashion and beauty industry, **Fanny Serrano** created Fanny Serrano's Cosmetics, the product of his ingenuity and expertise. The Philippine Marketing Excellence Awards Institute, Asian Institute of Marketing and Entrepreneurship and Sales & Marketing Magazine have named Fanny Serrano's Cosmetics the Most Outstanding Cosmetics Products. The products have dominated the market since their launch with their high quality and competitive price. Fanny is currently occupied with Rev'lation Int'l Inc., a direct selling company of beauty and wellness products, as creative designer and director. **Edison Anilao** is president and CEO and **Mary Ann Pagsibigan** is chair.

FS Cosmetics will soon be marketed in Dubai as well, with FAME Cosmetics and Perfume Establishment as the product line's first international distributor.

"I never dreamed of going international with my cosmetic line," Fanny said. "I was content with its success in the Philippines."

The secret of his success?

"I seek to satisfy myself first and be happy with the result of what I am doing, without thinking of financial returns."

(For feedback, e-mail wateringholeshangri-la@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaith-band.com)

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Ibong Adarna as time capsule

From page A27

technical dazzle, merely refracted vaunted Hollywood conventions. The influences are apparent enough: The palatial set-ups recall De Mille. The framing and choreography of the royal dancers has Busby Berkeley written all over them. And Canuplin, playing the court jester, unabashedly channels Chaplin, down to a wordless slapstick sequence performed flawlessly in sync with the music.

There's even a musical number near the end that has Fred Cortes (a stunningly handsome Valentino look-alike, if a rather effete actor) crooning his *basso profundo* to Del Sol's high soprano, a la Nelson Eddy and Jeanette McDonald.

Homespun wisdom

Such cinematic larceny, however, deserves to be overlooked in the face of the quintessentially Filipino spirit that imbues the whole production.

The story itself is steeped in homespun Pinoy wisdom, with seasoned aphorisms like *"Ang hindi marunong lumingon sa pinanggalingan…"* actually making it to the script as dialogue. Much of "Ibong Adarna," in fact, sounds less like a movie as we know it today, and more like a primary-school storytelling aid, with its deadpan emphasis on robust Christian values despite the riot of Ottoman-era finery filling the screen.

For a 1941 film, "Ibong Adarna" is also surprisingly fast-paced and straightforward. More astoundingly, its women are strong-willed, intelligent and quick with verbal comebacks, and not the simpering Maria Claras Filipinas were often thought of at that time.

How much of this might be attributed to LVN's being run then by a formidable woman herself, Doña Narcisa Vda de Leon, is grist for conjecture. But it does give "Ibong Adarna" a recognizably modern temperament on top of its thrilling aesthetics.

That, above all, is what makes this film a valuable cultural heirloom.

Vintage movies like "Ibong Adarna" are time capsules that offer us a peek into our history and evolving habits as a people. The fact that it's one of only two of their kind left today is a national tragedy.

(E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph)

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12:50 / 3:00 / 5:10 / 7:20 / 9:30
FINDING NEVERLAND
2:00 / 4:20 / 6:40 / 9:00
THE INTERPRETER
12:40 / 3:20 / 6:00 / 8:40
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
1:00 / 3:20 / 4:00 / 6:20 / 7:00 / 9:20 / 10:00
THE WEDDING DATE
1:10 / 3:20 / 5:30 / 7:40 / 9:50
THE PACIFIER
1:50 / 4:10 / 6:30 / 8:50
SAHARA
1:30 / 4:10 / 6:50 / 9:30
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② CAN THIS BE LOVE
11:45 / 1:55 / 4:05 / 6:15 / 8:25
③ XXX 2: STATE OF THE UNION
11:45 / 1:55 / 4:05 / 6:15 / 8:25
④ SIX
11:50 / 2:05 / 4:20 / 6:35 / 8:50
⑤ TAGOS SA LAMAN
11:55 / 2:00 / 4:05 / 6:10 / 8:15
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ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE May 11
4:45pm Alaska vs. Red Bull / 7:35pm Talk N Text vs Purefoods
THE 'C' SHOW
May 21, Saturday 8pm
KEVYN LETTAU: MEMORIES OF LOVE
May 14, Saturday, 8pm
ASHANTI LIVE IN MANILA
May 26, Thursday 8pm

CENTER EVENTS

EXHIBITS	*The Saturday Group Art Exhibit featuring the works of the premier artists' group in the country including Mauro "Malang" Santos until May 15 at the Upper Ground Floor of Gateway Mall*
NEW STORES	*Fully Booked (Level 2), Time Zone (Level 3), Cello (Ground Floor) & and Kashieca (Level 3); all at Gateway Mall*
PERFORMANCES	*Guarana, Acoustic Jive, Arthur Manuntag / Romy Posadas & Friends are set to perform on May 13, 14 & 15 respectively at The Gateway Pavilion.*

LOG ON TO www.aranetacenter.net FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR WEEKLY E-MAIL ENTERTAINMENT UPDATES

How audiences are assaulted by broadcasters

WE'RE glad that more people are objecting to the proliferation of billboards in the metropolis. We weighed in against them some months ago, and know that it will take a bigger and more concerted effort to rationalize the irrational situation. This is visual pollution, and roles and limits must be imposed to keep it from spreading.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Another kind of media pollution we should guard and fight against is of the aural sort, and it's similarly been proliferating to unacceptable levels these past months.

Sound pollution is also reprehensible because it disturbs the peace, offends sensibilities, and could even lead to hearing impairment.

The rise in sound pollution in the metropolis was recently the subject of a report on television—and we found this ironic, because some TV people themselves have been contributing to the worsening problem.

A number of on-cam TV people don't report the news, they shout it—as though the microphone has yet to be invented! They do this to generate more "drama and excitement," but it's so patently hysterical and artificial that it distorts broadcast news reportage, which must be sober and objective, above all else.

Other "pollutants" on TV include music and comedy shows where the sound is tweaked so high that they approach disco and jukebox decibel levels.

Again, ersatz "excitement" is the objective here, as well as the "aural presence" that rockers feel music should have for maximum impact. But everything is just too loud, so will everybody pipe down?

Other offenders include commercials, radio, traffic sounds, "signature" horn toots, hawkers, vendors in buses, neighbors playing their tape decks or karaoke machines too loud, etc.! Our poor eardrums reel from the concerted aural assault, and we must collectively protest.

There are negative physiological and psychological repercussions to worry about here, not to mention artistic ones. So, if you're a sound polluter—shut up!

Feedback

FROM **Rep. Francis L. Nepomuceno** of Pampanga's First District: "I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude for your dedication and strong conviction in cleansing the entertainment industry and making our country a better place to live in. A columnist like you is a rare breed and worthy of the Filipino people's admiration. Keep up the good work.

"Please allow me to call the attention of the National Telecommunications Commission to crack its whip on abusive radio hosts and disc jockeys who engage in sexual innuendo and dirty jokes.

"I've received numerous reports from parents and civic groups on the rampant abuses on the airwaves. As early as six in the morning until the evening, some irresponsible radio talents lambast their listeners with a wide array of unwholesome commentaries that insult them.

"Worse, even children have access to these radio programs, and at their tender age, malicious remarks have been embedded in their minds. A concerned parent confides that questionable hosts and DJs maliciously explain sex acts with their boisterous laughter booming in the background.

"Under the Code of the Kapisanan ng mga Broadkaster sa Pilipinas, double entendre and garbage remarks are not allowed on the radio. We cannot fathom why the management of some radio stations has ignored the KBP Code.

"Radio stations are a powerful tool in disseminating information. It is frustrating that some radio stations promote pornography, a menace to society. The NTC has the power to cancel the franchise of an erring radio station..."

CMMA 2005

DO YOU want to cite an artist in the field of music for outstanding work and nominate him or his work for the Catholic Mass Media Awards this year? Please comply with these requirements:

Entries must be submitted on eight copies of high-quality audio cassettes or CDs/VCDs/VHS tapes.

Each tape or CD must carry the official cue sheet indicating the title, length and category entered.

Lyrics must be written in double space.

Deadline for nominations is May 16. For more information, call 867-4026.

Too many commercials

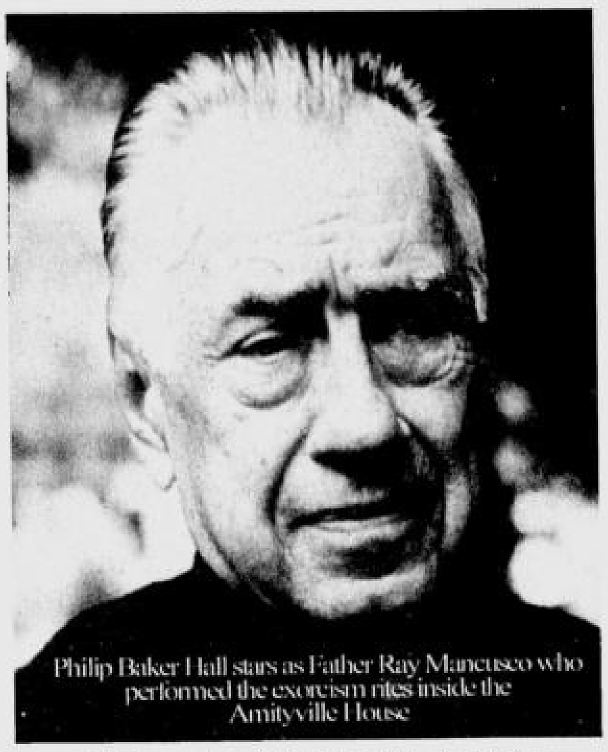
WE'VE been receiving complaints from viewers who feel that some TV shows are exceeding the number of minutes of advertising material (commercials) allowed per broadcast hour.

In addition, they complain about too many "casual mentions" and product or "exchange-deal" plugs that further add to the commercial content of Philippine television.

They're asking government and industry bodies to step in, to make erring programs toe the line in this regard. Serve the viewers, please!

Amityville Horror
Based on the Terrifying True Story

Second of a series



Philip Baker Hall stars as Father Ray Mancusco who performed the exorcism rites inside the Amityville House

On November 13, 1974, police received a frantic phone call that led them to a nightmarish crime scene at the Defeo residence in Amytiville, Long Island. The murderer, Ronald Defeo confessed to killing his beloved parents and four siblings , saying 'demonic spirits' in the house possessed him and drove him to the massacre.

On December 18, 1975, the new owners George and Kathleen Lutz and their children moved into the DeFeo home. The parish priest Father Ray Mancusco arrived to bless the family's new home on the same day they moved into it. While the Lutzes unloaded their rented moving van, the Catholic priest entered the house and began his ritual blessing alone. He made his way upstairs to the second floor and entered the northeast bedroom, which had been Marc and John DeFeos' room.

As he sprinkled holy water around the room and recited a prayer, he heard a loud male voice allegedly say, "Get out!" Although the priest supposedly did not tell the family about the voice, he did warn them about the room, saying, "Don't use it as a bedroom. Don't let anyone sleep in there." According to a Good Housekeeping article, dated April 1977, the Lutzes followed the priest's advice, turning the room into a sewing room.

From the very first night they moved in, the family claimed they felt strange sensations. Anson had written that the family's personality had drastically changed. On one occasion , the young couple beat their children with a strap and large wooden spoon. After moving to the house, the children apparently had become brats.

Purportedly, things worsened over the next few weeks. From the stench of bile to the smell of cheap perfume, the family became increasingly perplexed by the mysterious odors that would emanate from different locations of the house. Black stains appeared on the toilets and could not be lifted even with Clorox. Green slime ran down walls, although there appeared to be no reason or source. Hundreds of flies appeared in the sewing room despite it being the dead of winter.

The phenomena then turned physical. Kathy was victimized by unseen touches, which had sometimes forced her to pass out. On the other hand, George would sit hours by the fireplace because he suffered from constant chills. In addition, he would wake up nightly at 3:15 a.m., reasoning that there was a connection between that hour and the hour the DeFeos were killed.

As the month progressed, apparently the situation worsened again for the family. Anson reported that George awoke one night to witness his wife transform into a 90 year old hag. The next night, she began levitating off the bed, forcing her husband to grab her before she floated away.

At one time, George almost murdered his entire family after hearing some voices in his head telling him to kill his family.

Realizing they needed help, the family contacted the same Catholic priest to ask him to return to perform another blessing. The priest had been feeling the aftereffects from the first blessing. Whatever was plaguing the family was also bothering the priest.

After failing to get the priest to return, the family took matters into their own hands. Armed with a crucifix, they walked throughout the house reciting the Lord's Prayer. A chorus of voices erupted in response, asking them, "Will you stop?

After 28 days in the DeFeo home, the family claimed they could take no more. They grabbed only a few belongings and fled the house, taking shelter at Kathy Lutz's mother's home in nearby Babylon. ADVT.

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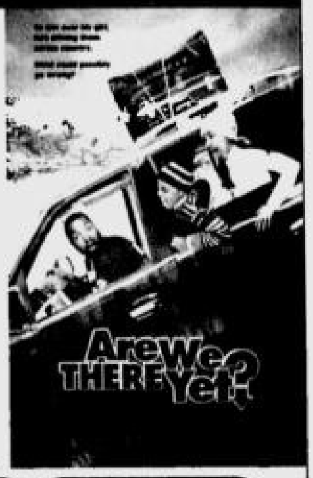

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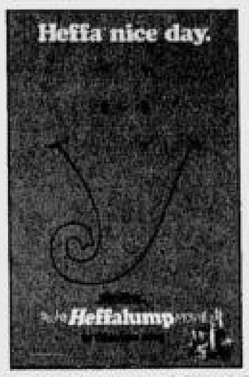

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1. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11:00 FS / 11:30 MF / 2:10 / 5:00 7:30
10:15 LFS / 10:40 LMF / 1:05 END
2. POOH'S HEFFALUMP
11:00 FS / 11:35 MF / 1:25 / 3:15 / 5:05 / 6:55
8:45 / 10:00 LFS / 10:35 LMF / 11:45 END
633-8876

sm megamall cinema 1
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11:50 FS / 12:20 MF / 3:10 / 6:00
8:25 LFS / 8:50 LMF / 11:15 END
633-1901

sm cebu cinema
CINEMA 1: xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
11:30 MF / 1:30 / 3:30 / 5:30 / 7:30
9:10 LFS / 9:30 LMF / 11:10 END
CINEMA 3: KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11:00 MF / 1:39 / 4:16 / 6:53
9:20 LFS/9:30 LMF / 11:55 END
(032) 231-3878

METRO MANILA

sm megamall
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
3 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
4 THE INTERPRETER
5 SIX
6 THE WEDDING DATE
7 RESERVED
8 RESERVED
9 RESERVED
10 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11 POOH HEFFALUMP MOVIE
12 CAN THIS BE LOVE

sm city fairview
1 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
2 INTERPRETER
3 GUESS WHO
4 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
5 CAN THIS BE LOVE
6 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
7 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
8 THE PACIFIER
9 WEDDING DATE
10 SAHARA
11 SAMARA: RING 2
12 SIX

sm city north edsa
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 RESERVED
4 THE WEDDING DATE
5 GUESS WHO
6 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
7 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
8 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

sm city manila
1 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
2 SIX
3 THE WEDDING DATE
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
5 FINDING NEVERLAND
6 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
7 GUESS WHO
8 THE INTERPRETER
9 CAN THIS BE LOVE
10 SAHARA
11 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
12 SAMARA: RING 2

sm city sta. mesa
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
4 RESERVED
5 RESERVED
6 THE WEDDING DATE
7 SAHARA
8 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
9 SIX
10 GUESS WHO

sm city southmall
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
5 GUESS WHO
6 SIX
7 CAN THIS BE LOVE
8 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
9 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
10 SAMARA: RING 2

sm city bicutan
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 THE INTERPRETER
4 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

sm cinema tutuban
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

sm supercenter sucat
1 THE JACKET
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

LUZON

sm city pampanga
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
3 THE PACIFIER
4 THE INTERPRETER
5 SAHARA
6 CAN THIS BE LOVE

sm city baguio
1 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 THE WEDDING DATE

sm city batangas
1 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 SAMARA: RING 2

sm city dasmariñas
1 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 THE INTERPRETER
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

sm city marilao
1 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
2 THE JACKET
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

sm city bacoor
1 SAMARA: RING 2
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
5 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
6 CAN THIS BE LOVE
7 THE INTERPRETER
8 SAHARA

sm city lucena
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

sm city cebu
1 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
2 RESERVED
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 THE WEDDING DATE
5 FINDING NEVERLAND
6 THE PACIFIER
7 CAN THIS BE LOVE
8 SAHARA

sm city iloilo
1 THE PACIFIER
2 RESERVED
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 THE JACKET
5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
6 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
7 RESERVED
8 ONG BAK: THE THAI WARRIOR

sm city davao
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 BOOGEYMAN
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
5 THE WEDDING DATE
6 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

sm city cagayan de oro
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 FINDING NEVERLAND
4 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

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EPISODE III
OPENS MAY 19

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GALLERIA
632-9115/16

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN • THX
12:45 3:40 6:35 9:30

2 XXX 2
10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

3 THE INTERPRETER
11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00

4 SIX
10:45 1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00

5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
10:25 1:20 4:15 7:10 10:00

6 THE WEDDING DATE
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

7 SAHARA
1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00

8 BOSO

9 THE PACIFIER
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

10 GUESS WHO?
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

ERMITA
536-7809 to 12

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
10:10 12:55 3:40 6:25 9:20

2 SAHARA

3 XXX 2
11:05 1:15 3:25 5:35 7:45 10:00

4 THE WEDDING DATE
10:20 12:15 2:10 4:05 6:00 7:55 10:00

5 GUESS WHO?
10:20 12:15 2:10 4:05 6:00 7:55 10:00

6 SIX
11:00 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

7 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11:10 1:55 4:40 7:25 10:00

METRO EAST
682-8193 • 682-8199

1 THE WEDDING DATE
11:00 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

2 SIX
10:50 12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

3 THE INTERPRETER
11:20 1:40 4:00 6:30 9:00

4 GUESS WHO?
11:30 1:50 4:10 6:30 9:00

5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
10:55 1:55 4:55 7:55

6 LOVE ME IF YOU DARE
11:00 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

7 XXX 2
10:30 12:50 3:10 5:30 7:50 10:20

8 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
1:55 4:55 7:55 10:30

NOVALICHES
935-3229/31

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2:00 5:10 8:25

2 XXX 2
12:00 1:55 4:05 6:15 8:30

3 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
11:50 2:40 5:30 8:20

4 GUESS WHO?
12:50 3:20 5:50 8:25

5 SIX
10:40 1:05 3:30 5:55 8:25

6 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
10:20 1:30 4:40 7:50

7 RESERVE

8 RESERVE

PIONEER
687-5378

1 XXX 2
2 RING OF NIBELUNGS
3 SIX
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

CITISQUARE MALABON
288-2575

1 OK, KA PARE KO
2 SAHARA
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

CAINTA
240-4681

1 XXX 2
2 SAHARA
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS

Boso is the first digital film by **DIGITAL VIVA** *and is directed by the award-winning director,* **JON RED**

"BOSO, shot on a digital video, is a sexy dark comedy about Jake, caretaker of a boarding house by day and a peeping-Tom by night. In a place filled with twisted characters and absurd lives, he oversees each tenat's secrets, daily routines and private world. Jake continues "playing God" until he meets and falls for Cecilia, a woman who makes him realize the essence of beauty - unseen by the eyes. Later, a tragic accident leads to an unexpected twist and dramatic confrontation.

Starring:
KATYA SANTOS, ALLEN DIZON, GWEN GARCI, JEFFREY QUIZON

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STA. ROSA
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1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 XXX 2
3 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
4 CURSED
5 PARAISO

LIPA
(043) 757-3664
(043) 312-5870

1 SAHARA
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 ASTERIX AND OBELIX
4 PARAISO
5 XXX 2

DASMARIÑAS
(046) 852-2125
(046) 416-4332

1 XXX 2
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 SAHARA
4 THE INTERPRETER
5 THE JACKET

ANGELES
(045) 892-2348

1 XXX 2
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 SAHARA
4 PARAISO

IMUS
(046) 875-3838
(046) 471-8188

1 TAGOS SA LAMAN
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 THE JACKET
4 XXX 2
5 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
6 THE INTERPRETER

STARMILLS
(045) 875-1927
(045) 961-5270

1 THE INTERPRETER
2 SAHARA
3 THE WEDDING DATE
4 XXX 2
5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
6 SAMARA RING 2

BACOLOD
(034) 441-0453
(034) 441-0459

1 XXX 2
2 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
5 THE PACIFIER
6 PARAISO

ILOILO
(033) 338-8070

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 XXX 2
3 THE JACKET
4 ONG BAK
5 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
6 SPANGLISH

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May 20&21, 2005

GREENBELT 1
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AYALA CINEMAS

AYALA CINEMAS

THX

Reserve your seats by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS GB4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 XXX 2	2 SA AKING PAGKAKAGISING MULA SA KAMULATAN	3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN	4 CAN THIS BE LOVE	
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 GUESS WHO	2 XXX 2	3 THX KINGDOM OF HEAVEN 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS		
	4 SHATTERED GLASS	5 THE WEDDING DATE	6 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN	7 CAN THIS BE LOVE	
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 XXX 2 1:10, 3:15, 5:20, 7:25, 9:30	2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30			
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX KINGDOM OF HEAVEN 2:30, 5:30, 8:30, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX KINGDOM OF HEAVEN 1:30, 4:30, 7:30,10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS			
	3 SHATTERED GLASS 1:05, 3:10, 5:15, 7:20, 9:25, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 THE INTERPRETER 1:00, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 XXX 2 2:20, 4:30, 6:40, 8:50, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX KINGDOM OF HEAVEN	2 XXX 2			
	3 CAN THIS BE LOVE	4 GUESS WHO	5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN		
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN	2 XXX 2	3 THE WEDDING DATE	4 CAN THIS BE LOVE	

8 DAYS
TO GO

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MTRCB Rating: General Audience (G)

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Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324

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②	Wedding Date
③	Kingdom Of Heaven
④	Can This Be Love

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⑤	Guess Who
⑥	XXX 2
⑦	Kingdom Of Heaven

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MARKET! MARKET!

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Featuring music from
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LILO & STITCH
ISLAND FAVORITES
May 13, 4 pm and 6 pm
Activity Center

Catch Lilo's summer musical show featuring Bea Binene as LILO, Chynna Ortaleza and Nadine Samonte as NANI, Dion Ignacio and Tyrone Perez as DAVID, Paul Salas as DANIEL. Plus the SOP Boys Emil and Yexel.

Directed by: Freddie Santos

Reserved seats on a first-come, first-serve basis for shoppers who present P300 worth of receipts on May 13

SALE!
SALE!
Time to Harvest the Best Deals
May 13 10am-9pm
May 14 10am-12mn
May 15 10am-9pm

Ibong Adarna . . .

From page A28

Before it was made into a film, "Ibong Adarna" existed as a popular *corrido* about three princes from the Kingdom of Berbania who travel to a forest in search of an enchanted bird. The *adarna's* sweet songs, it is said, will cure the princes' father of a lingering illness. As in all fables, the brothers' journey becomes a test of bravery, goodness and gallantry in pursuit of honor and a beautiful woman to bring home to the kingdom.

In making a film version of this tale, Salumbides and his team found an excuse in the Moorish, "Arabian Nights" flavor of the story to go to town with flamboyant technical and production values. Were it in full color, "Ibong Adarna" would have rivaled the intense imagery of the Hollywood "Arabian Nights" that was released only a year later, starring Jon Hall and Maria Montez.

Such proficiency can be seen in the panoramic matte backdrops of the imposing palace and the kingdom of Berbania, in the tricky long shots of the royal court that simulate great depth and dimension, and the famous colored sequence of the bird bursting into full plumage, which was reportedly painted on frame by frame.

Unfortunately, this highlight wasn't in the extant copy of the film that was restored, so the sequence now stands as a series of flickering fade-to-black scenes as the bird changes plumage seven times. Likewise, part 6 of the film stock was nowhere to be found and is presumably lost forever, so the restored version has a considerable jump in its narrative.

Fine showcase

Still, what is left is a fine showcase of vintage Filipino filmmaking at its most imaginative and ingenious.

One may argue that "Ibong Adarna," for all its

IBONG ADARNA/ A24

SHANG CINEPLEX

① KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
MTRCB: PG-13
12.55, 4:00, 7:05, 10:10 LMF

② GUESS WHO
MTRCB: PG-13
12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00 LMF

③ SPONGEBOB
MTRCB: GP
12:40, 2:45, 4:50, 6:55, 9:00 LMF

④ INTERPRETER
MTRCB: PG-13
1:40, 4:30, 7:20, 10:10 LMF

PREMIERE THEATRE XXX 2
MTRCB: PG-13 12.20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00 LMF

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

Get Your Star Wars Movie Tickets Now!

Be one of the first to catch the simultaneous U.S. screening of Star Wars: Episode III Revenge of the Sith at the Shang Cineplex on May 18! Premiere screening starts at 10:00pm.

Advance tickets* for sale at no extra service fee from May 6, 2005 onwards. Available at the Shang Cineplex ticket counters at Level 6 and the ticket booth at Level 1.

* Selected screenings from May 18-22

Regular Ticket Price
Cinemas 1 to 4 - P180
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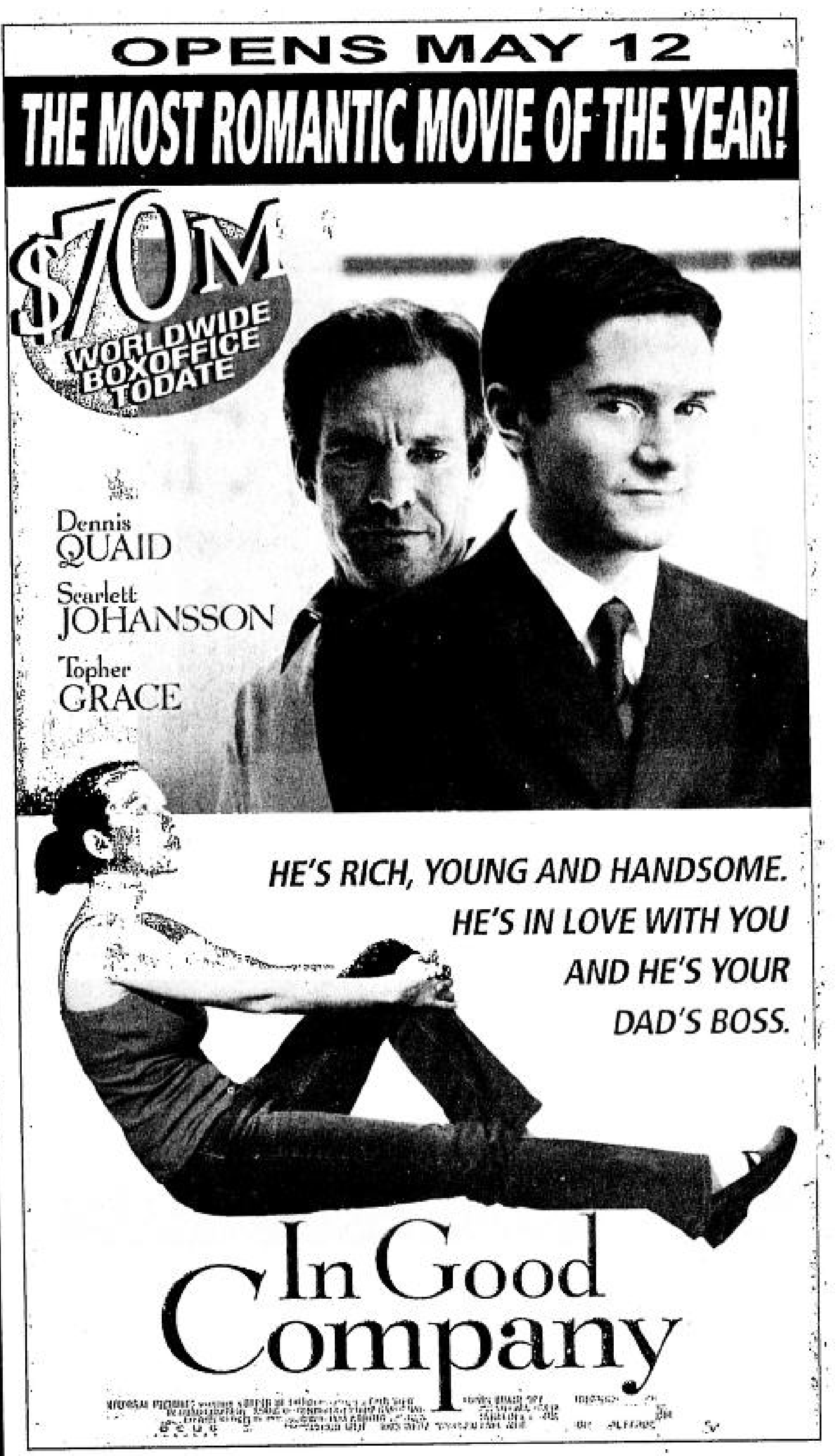
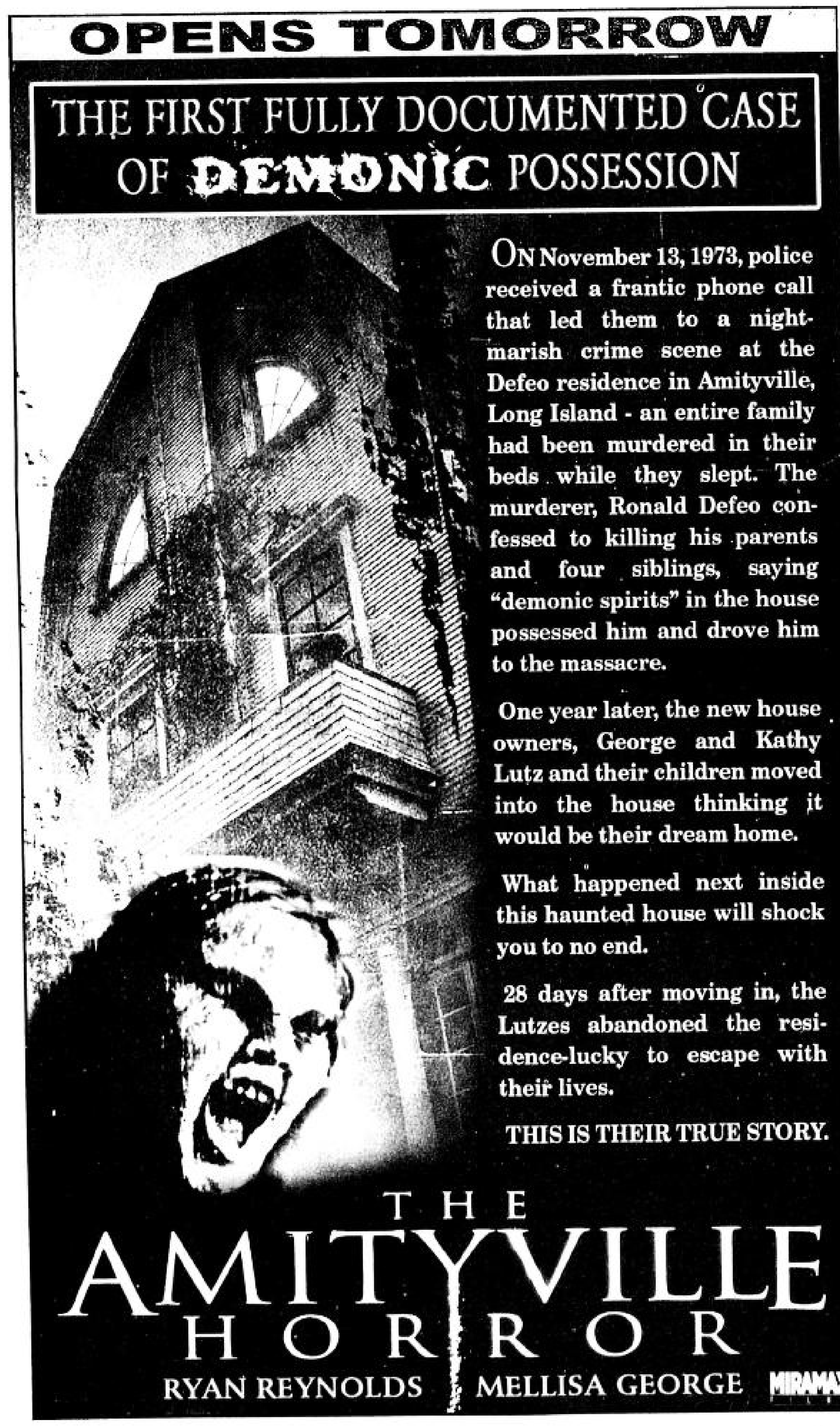
Call 633-7851, loc. 171 or 633-2227 / 633-4735 for more details.

Shangri-La Plaza





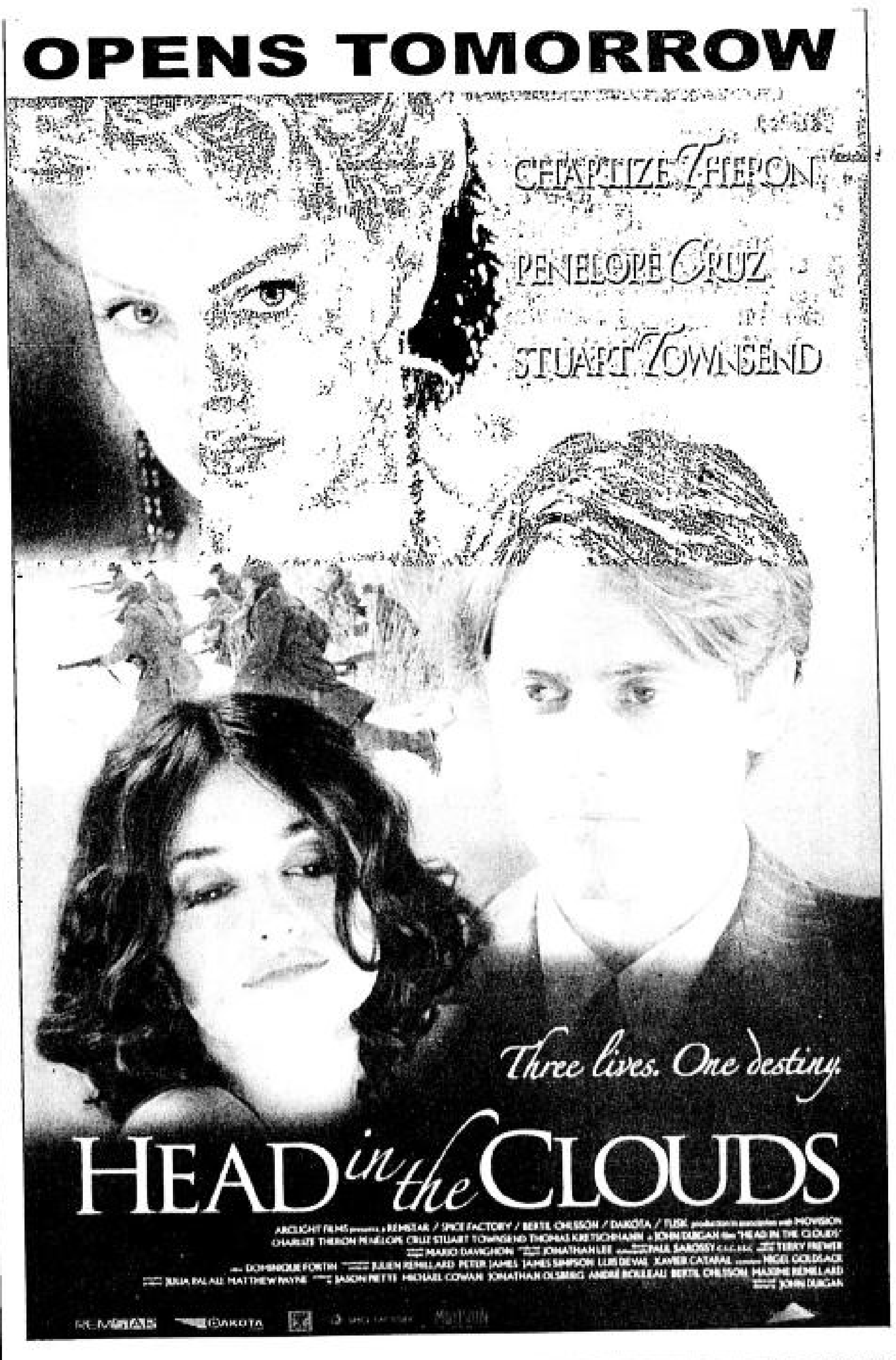
ON November 13, 1973, police received a frantic phone call that led them to a nightmarish crime scene at the Defeo residence in Amityville, Long Island - an entire family had been murdered in their beds while they slept. The murderer, Ronald Defeo confessed to killing his parents and four siblings, saying "demonic spirits" in the house possessed him and drove him to the massacre.

One year later, the new house owners, George and Kathy Lutz and their children moved into the house thinking it would be their dream home.

What happened next inside this haunted house will shock you to no end.

28 days after moving in, the Lutzes abandoned the residence-lucky to escape with their lives.

THIS IS THEIR TRUE STORY.



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GUESS WHO PG13 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50,10:15	KINGDOM OF HEAVEN PG13 12:50,3:50,6:50,9:50	THE INTERPRETER PG13 11:40,2:15,4:50,7:25,10:00
XXX 2: THE NEXT LEVEL PG13 12:40,3:00,5:20,7:40,10:00	CAN THIS BE LOVE GP 12:50,3:10,5:30 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN PG13 8:05	KINGDOM OF HEAVEN PG13 1:30,4:30,7:30,10:30

star group of cinemas movie guide
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3 Can This Be Love	1 Can This Be Love	1 War Eagles
4 Kingdom of Heaven	2 Tagos sa Laman	2 Rental Reservation
5 XXX 2	3 Under Renovation	Free Style Live!
Rachel Ann Go Live	4 Under Renovation	Metropolis Alabang May 7 Sat
Starmall Edsa May 7 Sat	5 Kingdom of Heaven	2pm at the Trade Hall (4th level)
3pm Food Court (2nd level)	6 XXX 2	

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CINEMA 1
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
10:30, 1:25, 4:20, 7:15, 10:10
PG13

CINEMA 2
TRIPLE X 2
10:50, 1:05, 3:20, 5:35, 7:50, 10:10
PG13

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MUSIC MUSEUM

MAY 7, 2005	ZSA ZSA PADILLA & KARYLLE	9:00PM
May 13-14 2005	ELLA MAY SAISON	8:30PM

FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TUESDAY, MAY 10, 2005

ENTERTAINMENT

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Editor Emmie G. Velarde

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THE MUHLACHS treated only very close friends to a sumptuous dinner.

French resto party for Charlene

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

AGA Muhlach threw a birthday party for his gorgeous wife **Charlene** at Le Souffle Rockwell on Friday. It was an intimate gathering of the couple's relatives and close friends. They occupied the entire ground floor of the ritzy French resto.

The only show bizfolk around were lovebirds **Raymart Santiago** and **Claudine Barretto, Bayani Agbayani** and wife **Len. Albert** and **Liezl** (Aga's cousin) **Martinez** were also there.

Guests enjoyed a sumptuous meal of sea bass, rack of lamb and prawns with red or white wine on the side. Of course Aga and Charlene's adorable twins **Andres** and **Atasha** were present.

Atasha stayed close to Claudine most of the time. The soon-to-be Mrs. Raymart Santiago is surely honing her maternal skills already, and not only with adopted daughter **Sabina**.

Guess list

GUESS who this sultry singer is! She's back in circulation after a long hiatus. Some people say she's after the throne vacated by another diva who dropped out of the scene. That may be true, but what most people don't know is that the chanteuse just split up with her girlfriend (who got hitched abroad) that's why she's back with a vengeance! Yup! Beneath all her sexy gowns lies a man's heart!

Guess who this young show biz couple is! The matinee idol and the singer/actress have long been denying that they got back together. He is being teamed up with another young actress; she has been linked to a politician. But these are just cover-ups. The heartthrob sends his driver to fetch the young star when the coast is clear—that is when her protective parents are away—and they stay in his place for hours. They make it appear that their relationship is already a "closed book." Wonder what happens behind those closed doors then?

Did you know?

DID you know that **Jericho Rosales'** other nickname aside from Echo is "Jing?" The new "Panday" was chubby as a kid, as was called "Bondjing!" The monicker stuck, so to this day people in his inner circle fondly call him Jing.

Enough of shallow titles (Queen of This and King of That) and ridiculous screen names (Keanna Reeves, sexy stars named after shampoos and macho actors named after milk brands etc.) Find out more interesting stuff about the stars through their pet names.

Did you know that **Diana Zubiri** tried joining Star Circle's batch 6-9 but she didn't get through? Her perseverance paid off when FHM magazine got her to pose for its centerfold. Who can forget her controversial fly-over pictorial? Now that she's made, Diana has not lost sight of her FHM beginnings. The sexy actress says that she's indebted

FRENCH/ A24

'Ibong Adarna' as a time capsule

By Gibbs Cadiz

THERE is nothing like seeing a true classic like Vicente Salumbides' film, "Ibong Adarna," restored and screened recently at the UP Film Center for the first time since its release in 1941, to realize just how derelict we have been in preserving the signposts and products of our culture.

The picture was one of around 20 movies LVN Productions managed to produce before Japanese bombs rained down on Manila in December of that year. Sadly, only one other LVN film from that period survives—"Giliw Ko," which, like "Ibong Adarna," starred Mila Del Sol.

Still mesmerizing

"Ibong Adarna" was considered a noteworthy production for the level of sophistication it brought to the art of local motion pictures. Released in the same year Orson Welles' "Citizen Kane" thrilled audiences in the West with its groundbreaking synthesis of available film technologies at the time, "Ibong Adarna" represented an ambitious attempt by a home-grown movie studio to approximate the best conventions of Hollywood filmmaking.

Viewing the film now, restored to adequate if not pristine condition (the black-and-white cinematography by Remigio Young, Ray Lacap and Salumbides remains mesmerizing, but the glorious music of Francisco Buencamino Sr. and Jr. has warped considerably), is to realize how local films of this period were so much a product of their time and place—that is, of an era when the Philippines was a colony of America and, by extension, Hollywood.

But while 1941 already saw the world's film capital moving to a new direction with "Citizen Kane" and other novel releases like John Ford's "How Green Was My Valley" (which won the Best Picture Oscar over "Kane"), John Huston's "The Maltese Falcon," Alfred Hitchcock's "Suspicion," Howard Hawks' "Sergeant York," Frank Capra's "Meet John Doe," William Wyler's "The Little Foxes" and Preston Sturges' "Sullivan's Travels," LVN produced a film that took its cue from well-defined streams of early American cinema.

That it's one of only two movies of their kind surviving today is a national tragedy

Popular corrido

With its whimsical costumes, elaborate studio sets, theatrical blocking and arched, elocutionary dialogue, "Ibong Adarna" owed much to the swashbuckling films associated with Douglas Fairbanks Sr. like "The Thief of Baghdad," crossed with the hokey grandeur of Cecil B. De Mille's "cast-of-thousands" spectacles and even a bit of Charlie Chaplin's mimetic comedy routines.

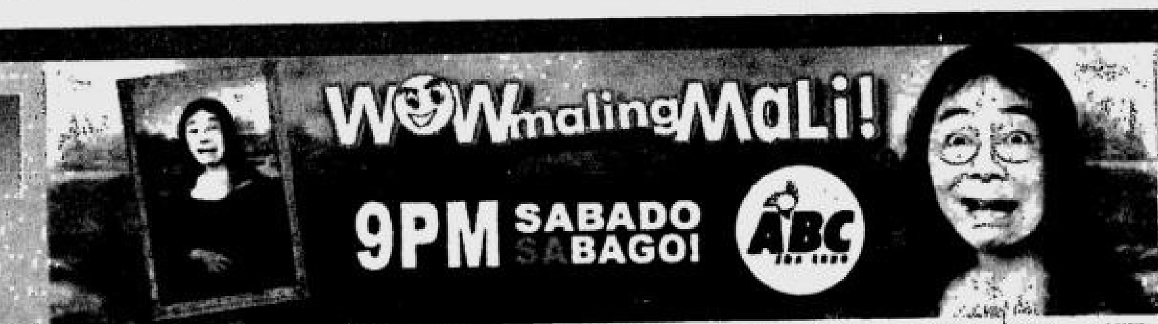
IBONG ADARNA/ A27

FRED Cortes and Mila del Sol in the landmark film KABABAYANCENTRAL

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Tuesday, May 10, 2005



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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Showbiz No. 1 (4:25 PM)	Yu-Gi-Oh! (5:10 PM)	Naruto (5:35 PM)	Vidjoking	TV Patrol World		Kamao	Hiram	Spirits	Memories Of Bali	Stained Glass	Bora			Insider
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	EZ Shop	Anime Ring Kasho				Sentro	Lizzie Mcguire	Three Blind Dates		Wow Mall		Big News	The Probe Team Documentaries		Billboard On-Air	
GMA 7		Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	One Piece	Knockout	Sorcerer Orphen	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Darna	Encantadia (8:45 PM)	All About Eve (9:15 PM)		Bahay Mo Ba 'To?			Saksi
RPN 9	Metro TV Shopping			Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	Scare Tactics	The Ring	Cold Cases		Medium		Cold Case		Newswatch Now	Tuesday Night Trail		
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Home Shopping Network		Asian X-Tour					IBC News Tonite	Up Close And Personal	
JackTV								X-Play	Banzai	Mad TV		Trigger Happy TV	Primetime Glick	South Park	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Stripperella	Family Guy	Wive Host	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Yakkity Yak	Chalkzone	Rocket Power	Hey Arnold!	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX	MYX Backtrax	Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	Top Of The Pops	MYX Remakes	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Good Morning Miami	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Eliminidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	JKX	Simple Life	One Tree Hill		Who Wants To Marry My Dad 2		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
Cinema One		Kahit Buhay Ko				Magkapatid				Kung Aagawin Mo Ang Lahat Sa Akin				Booba				Wala Nang Ibigin Pang Iba	
Studio 23				PBL Game 2				Ragnarok	Project Arma	Wazzup Wazzup	Angel			Smallville		News Central	Oprah		The Men's Room
AXN		CSI: Miami (Season II)		CSI: Miami (Season II)		Gensomaden Saiyuki	Gensomaden Saiyuki	Pensacola (Season III)		Alias (Season II)		Ripley's Believe It or Not		CSI: NY (Season I)		The Amazing Race 7		AXN Shakedown	
Star World	Frasier	The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Buffy The Vampire Slayer		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	Charmed		Wild Card/Miss USA 2005/Criss Angel Supernatural Mindfreak		Miss Match		Friends	Charmed
CNN				Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
National Geographic		Air Crash Investigation		Seconds From Disaster		Interpol Investigates		The Snake Wranglers	Croc Chronicles With Dr. Brady Barr	Wow		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Air Crash Investigation: Deadly Delay/ Amazon Claws		Seconds From Disaster	
Solar Sports						IBF Thailand Open '05			Women's Volleyball '04				NBA TV Daily	NBA Playoffs Semi-finals Game 1					Destination Finals
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fix!	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped	Passion For Dessert	Second Look		Look For Less	Life & Style		Clean House		Road & Track	Back To Basics
HBO				Suspect (4:10 PM)					Post Impact (6:20 PM)			Raiders Of The Lost Ark (8:05 PM)				Six Feet Under 47 Coming And Going	National Security (10:45 PM)		
Star Movies			The Real McCoy			The Sixth Man (5:15 PM)				Small Soldiers (7:10 PM)				Like Mike			Jawbreaker (10:40 PM)		
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	Ed, Edd N Eddy	Mucha Lucha!	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Gundam Wing	Shaman King	Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Dexter's Laboratory	Time Squad	Thundercats	He-Man & The Masters Of The Universe	Gundam Seed
ESPN		Eng. Premier Football League 04/05				English Premier League Highlights 2004/05		Asian X Games VI Presented by Toyota		Alp Masters Series, Telecom Italia Masters		Sportscenter Asia	Women's Pro Billiards '05						Sportscenter Asia
Disney Channel	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	The Sleepover Club	Art Attack/Un-talkative Bunny	Buzz Lightyear Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Wonderful World Of Disney			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	America's Funniest Home Video	According To Jim	Wonderful World Of Disney	
Cinemax			Tarzan Goes To India (3:45 PM)			100 Mile Rule (5:15 PM)				A League Of Their Own				Momentum			The Sum Of All Fears		
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Just Cause		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	Bewitched	The District		Just Cause					Missing (10:35 PM)		The District (11:25 PM)
Discovery Channel		Civilisations				Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Rides		Human Discovery		Wild Discovery		Ultimate Discovery		Science Mysteries	
Sports Plus				Arena Football: Colorado @ New Orleans						Zurich Classic of New Orleans Highlights		World Poker Tour ep.3 Aruba				World's Greatest Auto Shows		Nopi Tunerversion	Bikini Destination
NBN		Taiwan/ Winner TV Shopping		Value Vision	Teledyaryo	Value Vision		MMDA On The Road		Network Forum		Teledyaryo		Family Rosary Crusade		Paco Park Presents		Auto Focus	

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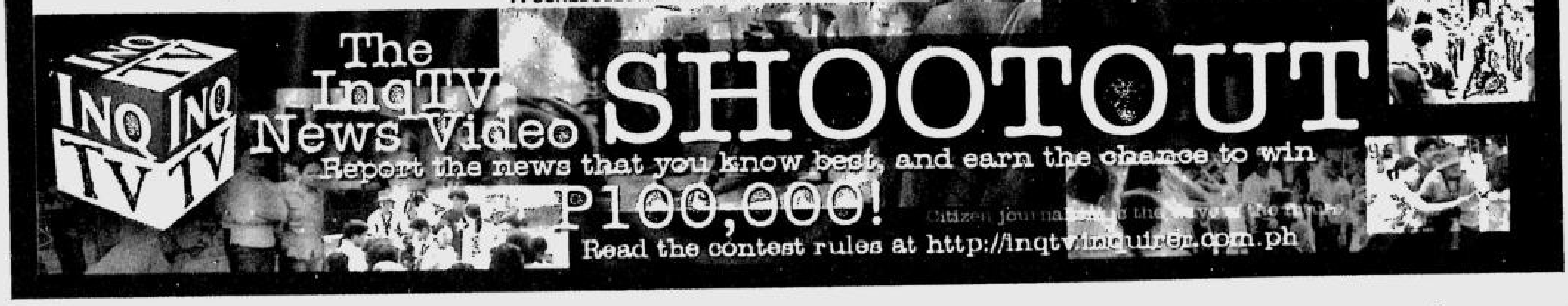
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Neda puts 1st quarter GDP growth at 5%

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL Economic and Development Authority yesterday estimated that the economy, as measured by the gross domestic product (GDP), expanded by about 5 percent in the first quarter of the year.

The figure was lower than the full-year target of 5.3 to 6.3 percent, but better than the earlier projection that GDP growth for the period was lower than 5 percent.

"It [economic growth for the period] was not as bad as we initially thought it would be. In fact, we may have quarter-on-quarter growth," Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri said in a press briefing yesterday.

The Neda chief earlier said the economy could have contracted in the first quarter of the year compared with the fourth quarter of last year due to the adverse effects of the El Niño weather phenomenon on the agriculture sector. Agriculture accounts for a fifth of the country's GDP, which is the total value of goods produced. and services rendered in an economy for a given period.

In the fourth quarter of 2004, the economy grew by 0.6 percent compared with the previous quarter.

But Neri said leading indicators were better than originally expected. Estimates put agriculture output in the first quarter at lower than the 4.8-percent full-year average last year, but could be higher than the 1.3 percent in the fourth quarter of 2004.

The government will announce the first-quarter GDP growth figures on May 30.

Neri, who also sits as director general of the Neda, said the government was not poised to change the 2004 average GDP target of 5.3 to 6.3 percent, adding it was still very much achievable especially with the entry of investments and the government's infrastructure spending in the remaining quarters of the year.

The Neda has already approved the construction of several infrastructure projects starting 2005. These included the P27-billion Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway Project, the P27-billion North Rail Project, and the P10-billion rehabilitation of the South Luzon Expressway and the Southern Tagalog Arterial Road.

The government aims to invest about P100 billion a year in infrastructure projects to achieve the medium-term goal of increasing the country's infrastructure spending-to-GDP ratio from 2.6 percent in 2003 to 4.2 percent by 2010.

Neri said investment infrastructure would partly compensate for the projected slower growth of the agriculture sector.

He said, however, that the full-year figure could hover near the low-end of the target, and thus reflect a year-on-year economic slowdown, if oil prices continued to soar.

T-bill rates ease; 91-day yield at 6.174%

TREASURY bill rates continued to slide across the board yesterday as the high level of liquidity among banks forced them to scramble for the virtually risk-free government securities in the absence of equally attractive investment alternatives.

Treasury officials also credited the progress on the much-awaited value-added tax (VAT) bill, the compromise version of which was reported to have already been approved by senators, for the decline in treasury bill yields.

The bellwether 91-day rate eased to 6.174 percent, or 14.5 basis points lower than the 6.319 percent last week. The three-month debt instrument was oversubscribed as bids reached P9.46 billion compared with the government's debt offering of only P2 billion for each maturity.

"The drop was due to liquidity, while inflation is very much in control," National Treasurer Omar Cruz said in a briefing after yesterday's auction. Cruz explained that while inflation averaged at a relatively high 8.5 percent in the first four months of the year, it was not too much of a market concern as it was expected to decline in the second half.

Inflation concerns also eased after the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas last week decided to keep its overnight policy rates at 7 percent for borrowing and 9.25 percent for lending. The BSP decision was based on the projection that inflation would not accelerate to unmanageable levels.

"There is also positive sentiment over the VAT," he added. The domestic capital market has closely watched the progress of the VAT bill, which is expected to put order in the government's shaky fiscal sector.

The 182-day treasury bill rate dropped by 22.5 basis points to 7.349 percent. Appetite for the six-month debt instrument was also high, with tenders reaching P9.42 billion. The 364-day bills fetched a rate of 8.312 percent, or 22.1 basis points lower than its

T-BILL/ B2

INDICATORS

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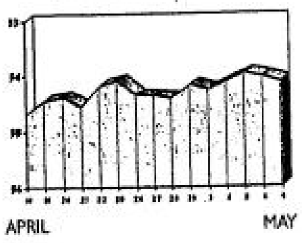


P54.130= $1
As of 5 p.m., May 9, 2005

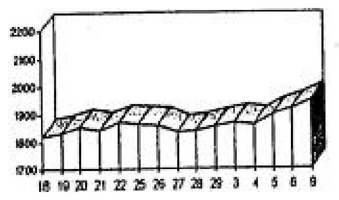
¥104.75= $1
As of 5 p.m., May 6, 2005

GOLD: $425.60-426.10
per ounce Hong Kong, May 9, 2005

STOCK MARKET

Shares end 1.7% higher on VAT progress

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



SHARES closed higher yesterday, with investors snapping up blue chips on prospects that Congress will finally pass long-delayed revisions to the value-added tax law within a week.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index closed up 33 points, or 1.7 percent, to 1,946.77, after gaining 1.1 percent Friday to finish at 1,913.77.

The broader All Shares Index ended 17.43 points higher at 1,913.77, after climbing Friday 11.90 points to 1,171.94.

"The market expects that the VAT bill will finally be passed," said Mark Canizares, investment analyst at CitisecOnline.com. "We've heard that lawmakers have already reached a compromise."

A bill revising the VAT law to raise more revenue has been stalled by disagreements between senators and congressmen on whether to raise the VAT rate. A final compromise is expected to be completed this week.

Gainers, led by index heavyweight Philippine Long Distance Telephone

SHARES/ B2

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Cool off duty

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

TODAY we go back to that wonderful issue on the import duty of "powdered" juice. Apparently, the Bureau of Customs wants it over and done with—muy pronto.

From what I heard at the piers, the customs bureau is now ready to propose a ludicrous compromise on the issue.

The bureau came up with its "compromise proposal" after it recently held a total of one meeting with the sector affected most by the issue—the local sugar industry.

If only this popularity-watchful cute administration of Gloriaetta can make Congress move as fast as the customs bureau ...

* * *

LAST week, word went around the piers that the bureau would decide in favor of an influential US multinational called Kraft, maker of the "Tang" brand of powdered juice.

The bureau reportedly would soon rule that, the import duty on powdered juice should only be 1 percent, something Kraft has been claiming all along.

That got the sugar industry all worked up, forcing its big shots to hurry to Malacañang to ask Gloriaetta to talk some sense into the customs bureau.

To the sugar industry, in setting the import duty, the customs bureau must treat powdered juice like sugar, because it is actually roughly 80 percent sugar.

Thus, instead of the 1-percent duty on "Tang," which Kraft wanted, the company should pay for the tariff rate set by the government for sugar, which is 48 percent.

In the entire domestic market for powdered juice, Kraft's "Tang" only controls roughly 50 percent. That's a lot of sugar!

* * *

AS a compromise between 1 percent (Kraft's position) and 48 percent (the sugar industry's position), the customs bureau is putting on the table—are you ready for this—a 3-percent tariff rate.

Sure, boss, the sugar industry cannot wait to accept the compromise, since it will only mean the death of an industry that gives millions of Filipinos their livelihood!

As consolation to those poor sugar farm workers, the "compromise proposal" of the customs bureau may still go up to 5 percent.

Huling tawad, okay!

Thus, the customs bureau may only intend that 3 percent "compromise proposal" as a means to cool off the angry sugar industry mob. What's that, cool off duty?

* * *

ANYWAY, that 5 percent is supposed to be the maximum tariff rate on "finished goods" under the Afta, or the Asean Free Trade Agreement.

Since Kraft is shipping "Tang" from its factory in Thailand, it is telling the customs bureau that the imported "Tang" should fall under the Afta rules.

The rates could go from 1 percent to 5 percent. Of course Kraft would have to go for the lowest. And the customs bureau of course would compromise. Nice drama!

And so, from 1 percent, the customs bureau already went up to 3 percent, and then it would try to please the sugar industry some more by going up, eventually, to 5 percent.

Such a brilliant strategy! This haggling, Divisoria-style, makes us think that the customs bureau and Kraft already bended over backwards too much. What more can we ask of the tandem?

* * *

EVENTUALLY, at least based on the scenario they now talk about at the piers, the duty will end up at 5 percent.

There is a minor hitch in the script: Under the Afta, the liberalized tariff rates should apply on products that are exported to all other Asean countries.

That, according to the sugar industry, is still not the case with Kraft. It is exporting Tang from Thailand to the Philippines exclusively.

Should we feel special or what?

* * *

KRAFT used to make the "Tang" powdered juice here—as in locally.

Like other US multinationals, such as American Standard, Kraft closed its factory. Kraft just decided on its own that the Philippines should import the same product from its factory in Thailand.

Sometime in 2003, when the customs bureau was still under the straight Commissioner Antonio Bernardo, the bureau imposed the 48-percent duty on "Tang."

But Kraft gave that "Afta finished-product" argument, insisting on a 1 percent tariff, and it posted bonds with the customs bureau, pending the resolution of the issue.

Thanks to changes at the bureau, it now seems that Kraft would have its way with the entire sugar industry.

Is it surprising when, based on word at the piers, some of our heroes at customs have close ties with US multinationals, not to mention a lucrative business called bonded warehouse?

* * *

ACTUALLY, nobody can still say why Kraft exports "Tang" from Thailand exclusively to the Philippines.

After all, among all the Asean members, only the Philippines has millions upon millions of people who depend on sugar for their subsistence.

Whether they just want to kill our sugar industry, is hard to say. I only know that the local sugar industry is retooling itself, precisely for products like powdered juice, in the hope of giving the industry a fighting chance.

For instance, the Batangas-based Central Azucarera Don Pedro can now produce from 300,000 to 400,000 tons of special granulated sugar every year.

That is the sugar used in powdered juice, and the sugar mill reportedly invested billions on the project.

How will the sugar mill take the "compromise proposal" from the customs bureau? For that matter, how will its financiers take it? The banks, for instance!

* * *

THAT is the trend among multinationals. They close their factories here, import the same products from countries around us, and have a lot of fun with the minimal Philippine tariff rates.

If Kraft exports "Tang" from Thailand only to the Philippines, does it mean that it cannot have its way with the other Asean countries, and only the Philippines plays?

On the other hand, we were stupid enough to lower tariff rates on finished goods even ahead and much lower than those in other Asean members.

Or it could very well also be that, among the Asean members, only the Philippines has a customs bureau in which things can be easily, er, "arranged."

The multinationals don't even need the pressure from Washington, exerted through the embassy, although most of the time, such a tactic helps.

* * *

IRONICALLY, the Philippine sugar industry was designed to cater to the big business in the United States a long time ago, before our so-called "independence."

In the United States, they even used to make special arrangements for Philippine sugar, which of course took care of US business interest.

Nowadays, with the Philippine sugar industry no longer "cost effective," it is rather convenient for US business to drop it, say, in favor of the sugar industry in places like Thailand.

And so all the employment opportunities move out of the Philippines, going to other countries around us.

For whether we like it or not, this "compromise" from the customs bureau will ripple throughout the sugar industry, and even other business sectors.

Nobody, for one, will invest in the retooling of the sugar mills anymore, which we need to process all our sugar into something for export—or import substitute.

And so, instead of exporting sugar products, thanks to the bright guys in the customs bureau, we can just simply use up our hard earned dollars to import the same sugar, which we already have plenty of. *Napakasakit*, Kuya Eddie!

* * *

HERE is the catch in that customs bureau "compromise" proposal: Kraft pays 3-percent duty for "Tang" from Thailand.

The local makers of powdered juice will have to buy raw materials abroad and pay for a little import duty of between 5 and 15 percent.

Look at that: It is better to import finished products than to make them locally and provide work to some 11 million people.

Let's not even think of the multinationals. Let's just consider the Filipino-owned manufacturers. They will move their factories to other countries.

Such a trend has already been set. Local brands of shoes are now made in China, not to mention the local brands of T-shirts and pants that are made in Thailand.

The beauty of it all is that they don't have to worry about high import duties.

And everybody thought that the government needs so much money, it is even willing to kill us with taxes. But not Kraft! Is that it?

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9. Winners will be notified through registered mail.
10. Prizes are tax free.
11. Winners can claim their prize at Elite Machines Inc, Elite Bldg., 20 G. Araneta Ave. Ext, Quezon City. For Cebu winners, they may claim their prizes at Espiritu Bldg., 33 Gen. Maxilom Ave., Cebu City. For Davao winners, they can claim their prizes at Door 2, Lua Bldg., Quirino Ave. cor J.P. laurel St., Davao City.
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Signing of Underwriting Agreement. _ (from left to right) Armando Samia, First Senior Vice President, Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP), Antonio Abacan Jr., Chairman, First Metro Investment Corporation (FMIC), Atty. Romero Federico Quimbo, President & CEO, Pag-IBIG Fund, Hon. Vice President Noli de Castro, Chairman, Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), Reynaldo David, President & CEO, DBP, and Francisco Sebastian, President, FMIC.

Pag-IBIG to auction up to P7-B Housing Bonds

Pag-IBIG Fund will auction P5 billion worth of Housing Bonds, which may be increased to P7 billion in case of an oversubscription, in a bid to raise additional funds for its housing programs.

Pag-IBIG Fund recently signed an agreement with the Development Bank of the Philippines and the First Metro Investment Corporation to underwrite the bonds, with the Bureau of the Treasury (BTr) as facility agent.

The bonds shall carry a fixed interest rate equivalent to the bid rate to be awarded based on the "Dutch auction," payable semi-annually with a term of five (5) years and one day from the issue date.

The auction shall be conducted through the Automated Debt Auction Processing System (ADAPS) of the BTr, and shall be issued in scripless form, through the BTr's Registry of Scripless Securities (ROSS).

The bonds are a good credit risk as Pag-IBIG Fund is one of the country's most stable and strongest financial institutions today.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has approved the eligibility of the bonds as alternative compliance to the Agrarian Reform Credit requirement of banks as provided by P.D. 717, or the Agri-Agra Law. It is also eligible as sufficient compliance with Section 18 of the Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992.

The Insurance Commission has also approved the bonds' eligibility as admitted assets of insurance companies, as capital or reserve investment.

The Home Guaranty Corporation (HGC) guarantees the entire amount of principal and interest of up to 8.75 percent per annum. The HGC cash guarantee carries the full and unconditional guarantee of the Republic of the Philippines.

Interest earned on the bonds are tax exempt due to the HGC guarantee cover.

The housing bonds are also covered by a " bond sinking fund" to be set up by Pag-IBIG under the management and maintenance of the BTr.

Vice President Noli De Castro, concurrent chairman of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) hailed the bond issue, saying that it "solidifies the role of Pag-IBIG Fund, not only as the main financier of the government's shelter program, but in developing the country's capital market as well."

The Pag-IBIG Fund will announce the date of the auction to be held at the BTr office in Intramuros, Manila.

Only government securities eligible dealers (GSEDs) may participate in the auction. Non-GSEDs may participate by coursing their bids through GSED members.

T-bill rates ease . . .

From page B1

previous rate of 8.533 percent. (One percentage point is equivalent to 100 basis points.)

Treasury bill rates have been declining across all maturities for three consecutive auctions.

Although the passage of the VAT bill has been delayed by opposing views of the Senate and the Lower House, the Treasury expressed optimism that the bicameral conference committee of Congress would eventually approve the bill. The Treasury said it believed that legislators were aware of the negative fiscal impact of not having the bill passed.

The VAT bill is the key revenue-raising measure being pushed by the Arroyo administration to ease the government's fiscal problem. It is estimated to generate P60 billion to P80 billion in additional revenues a year. *Michelle V. Remo*

Shares end 1.7% higher . . .

From page B1

Co., or PLDT, beat losers 61 to 24, with 32 stocks closing unchanged.

PLDT, which accounted for 16 percent of yesterday's turnover, rose 1.4 percent to P1,435. Analysts said investors were still cheering PLDT's announcement last week that its first-quarter net profit rose 65 percent from the same period a year ago to P9.36 billion.

Banco de Oro, which announced Friday it bought the local branches of Singapore's United Overseas Bank as part of its expansion program, gained 5.6 percent to close at P29.

Blue chips Bank of the Philippine Islands rose 2 percent to P51.50, Globe Telecom gained 2.4 percent to P855 and SM Prime rose 1.4 percent to P7.50. *AP*

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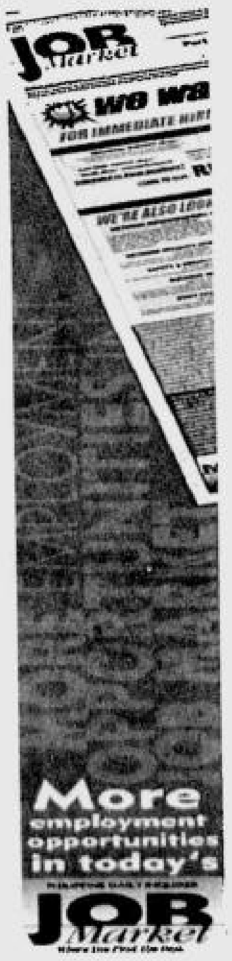

More employment opportunities in today's JOB Market

RP exporters see difficult times ahead

By Ronnel W. Domingo

EXPORTERS of foodstuff, holiday décor, gifts, toys and houseware yesterday have expressed their concern that they may lose out to competitors from China and Vietnam as the proposed wage hike in the Philippines could edge local suppliers out of the export markets.

Sergio Ortiz-Luis Jr., president of the Philippine Exporters Confederation (Philexport) said owners of small and medium businesses, would raise the issue during the 26th national conference of the Employers Confederation of the Philippines (Ecop) to be held at the Manila Hotel May 17 to 18.

Ecop is the recognized representative of employers during wage talks at the regional wage boards. Malacañang recently tasked the RWBs to study the appropriate increases in workers' minimum wage.

Labor groups have been clamoring for an increase of P125 in the daily minimum wage. But business leaders have said they could only afford up to P30 daily.

Ortiz-Luis said small exporters were already having difficulty competing with lower-priced products from China and Vietnam.

"Now [business owners'] operations are threatened with wage adjustments," he said. "If they are burdened with higher labor costs, the exporters doubt if they can continue to compete. About 95 percent of small exporters are trying to keep their heads above water."

At present, the exporters are already finding it difficult to retain customers, despite the country's quality products, he said.

Now, "copycat producers in China and Vietnam price their goods lower, and are stealing our customers away," Ortiz-Luis added.

Among those who expressed the most concerned were the Christmas Décor Association of the Philippines and the Philippine Food Processors and Exporters Organization.

"[They believe] that the dip in February export earnings was an indication of hard times ahead," Ortiz-Luis said. "They may not be able to meet their export targets."

He said the exporters also claimed that additional wages would affect Kalahi—the job-generation program of Philexport—which in turn is Philexport's contribution to the President's goal of generating more jobs.

Under the program, exporters teach rural workers to make export products. Once trained, these workers receive production orders from exporters.

Smart users may hit 23M by end 2005

By Clarissa S. Batino

SMART Communications Inc. yesterday said that the number of its subscribers would likely hit between 22 and 23 million by yearend, reflecting a slowdown in take-up to only about 19 percent against the phenomenal 48 percent increase in mobile customers in 2004.

Smart and Talk 'N Text subscribers stood at about 20.2 million as of the first quarter from 19.2 million by the end of 2004.

Mobile subscribers of the country's largest wireless company grew more than 6 million in 2004 from almost 13 million in 2003 despite implementing a tighter policy in 2004 of counting subscribers only when they have topped-up during the month.

"This year, we are looking at a subscriber base of 22 to 23 million," said Smart president Napoleon Nazareno in an interview. "We could not replicate what was done last year."

Still, Manuel Pangilinan, chair of Smart and its parent firm the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., projected that half of the estimated 84 million Filipinos would become mobile subscribers this year—a penetration rate of 50 percent.

About 43.5 percent or 34.8 million of the estimated 84 million Filipinos already own a mobile phone handset as of the first quarter.

Another PLDT subsidiary, the Pilipino Telephone Corp., yesterday told stockholders it may start paying out dividends in the next two years if the trend in the company's profitability would be sustained, its top officials said.

Piltel has been posting losses and has not paid dividends over the last eight 8 years. In 2004, the firm's fortune finally turned around. It earned a net income of P4.9 billion in 2004, against a net loss of P3.4 billion in 2003.

"Two years from now, we might be able to explore the possibility of granting dividends already if profits continue in the same trend and once we reverse the deficit in stockholders equity," said Nazareno, who is also president of Piltel.

Pangilinan, PLDT chair, said that Piltel was targeting a net income of P5 to P6 billion this year, based on the first quarter core earnings of P1.5 billion. Including foreign exchange gains, Piltel ended the first three months with P2.2 billion.

"We are on track to meet our full-year target of P5 to P6 billion, based on our performance in the first quarter," Pangilinan said during yesterday's stockholders meeting.

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VAT increase deferred till next January

MR. & MRS. Rabbit were crossing the road when Mr. Rabbit got run over by a tricycle. "Wait a minute. I read this joke last week." "No. No. You are not suffering from deja vu, it is a different joke." Anyway, the rabbit lay absolutely still with no signs of life. The motorist got out of his car and poured some drops out of a bottle into the rabbit's mouth. After a few minutes, the rabbit got up and ran back to his wife unhurt. "That's amazing," said the motorist's wife. "What did you give him?" "Just a few drops of hare restorer."

A man and wife were fighting in the car about their impending divorce. The man was driving at a leisurely 40 mph. "I want half of your assets," said the wife, "including the house." The man accelerated to 50 mph. "I want all the furniture, too." He accelerated to 60 mph. "Also, I want all your stocks and bonds." He sped up to 70 mph. "Lastly, I want total custody of the children. You will have no visiting rights." He accelerated to 80 mph before turning to hit a wall. "Well," he said, "I have one thing that you do not." "What's that?" she asked. "An airbag."

Elton John is marrying his boyfriend next year in one of the three European countries in which this is now legal. I don't consider homosexuality normal even though bisexuality doubles your chances of getting a date. If God had considered it desirable, he would have created Adam and Fred. I once tried getting in touch with my feminine side and I got a yeast infection. In Malaysia, the penalty for homosexuality is 7 years in jail locked up with hundreds of men. There's a three-year waiting list. All this sexuality is confusing. As I understand it, transvestites are the one that hang down from the ceiling; transsexuals are the ones that grow up.

ODE TO THE WEATHER MEN
I had a girl named April.
I was very glad I got her.
But I changed her for a girl named May
'Cause they say that May is hotter.

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

* * *

I have had to rewrite this article as an agreement on the VAT bill has just been announced. VAT will be increased from 10 percent to 12 percent but not until next January. I don't think that will please the President and, if they give her the authority, she can override this and make it effective immediately. Corporation Tax will be increased from 32 percent to 35 percent for three years and will then reduce to 30 percent.

The bill removes most of the exemptions including those enjoyed by power companies, fuel companies, doctors and lawyers. There will be restrictions on how business can use tax credits, which has been a major source of abuse. The House and the Senate are expected to approve the bill this week as they have the votes to ratify it. It is not yet known how much this will raise this year. The Phisix jumped 33 points but the peso weakened.

PLDT, produced 1st quarter results, which were better than expected, but the chair reiterated his forecast of P27 billion exclusive of one time gains so the shares barely moved. DGTL now claims over 2 million subscribers and is spending $200 million to expand its wireless network and upgrade capacity at Sun Cellular. It has just given a $30 million order to China.

Jollibee reported profits down by 10 percent even though sales were up 13 percent. The company decided not to increase prices but their operating costs rose because of higher electricity bills and transportation costs. Next month, electricity will rise again and they will have to contend with a wage increase, so unless they raise prices, the next quarter will be worse.

Last week, I predicted that the number of jobs created in the US would be exceptionally good. At 275,000, they were the second highest recorded and 100,000 above the expectations of economists. There was nothing clever about this. I just add up the weekly jobless claims in which one week fell below 300,000 for the first time, so it was obvious. Wages have increased steadily over the past 4 years, and now average $16 an hour. So an American earns in 2 hours what a Filipino earns in a week.

Assuming a 40-hour week, this is $640 or $2,800 a month. In England, the minimum weekly wage for an unskilled laborer is £220 or P22,000, roughly P100,000 a month, or just under $2,000. Of course, tax and insurance are deducted and the cost of living is much higher. A 2-bedroom duplex house in the suburbs of London costs P25 million. The same house in Cainta would probably cost P2 million.

As I am writing this on Mother's Day, it is only right that I pay tribute to my mother's memory. She died 10 years ago at the ripe old age of 96, and every week when she went to the Post Office to collect her pension, all the employees would say, "Here comes the government's worst investment." I used to visit her as often as I could and she was still working long hours in my brother's shop on her 90th birthday. In fact, the Press and the TV cameras were there and she gave a long hilarious interview, which appeared in newspapers the following day. The headline was BRITAIN'S OLDEST WORKING WOMAN and I still treasure the complete 1-page article.

She was very amusing, loving, artistic, terrible in math, and always in trouble at school for not paying attention. I am serious, loving, very good at math and terrible in art. I was a model student and never was in trouble at school. We were poor, but we were shoplifters.

MR. BEARBULL/B5

CURRENCIES

May 9, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.779910	1.000000	53.9880
Japan	Yen	0.007430	0.009527	0.5143
United Kingdom	Pound	1.474653	1.890800	102.0805
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.100087	0.128332	6.9284
Switzerland	Franc	0.646370	0.828775	44.7439
Canada	Dollar	0.628301	0.805607	43.4931
Singapore	Dollar	0.475728	0.609979	32.9315
Australia	Dollar	0.604675	0.775314	41.8577
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.068836	2.652661	143.2119
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.207971	0.266660	14.3964
Brunei	Dollar	0.474282	0.608125	32.8315
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000082	0.000105	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.019779	0.025361	1.3692
UAE	Dirham	0.212348	0.272272	14.6994
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.282200	69.2234
Argentina	Peso	0.269399	0.345423	18.6487
Brazil	Real	0.316072	0.405268	21.8796
Denmark	Kroner	0.134393	0.172319	9.3032
India	Rupee	0.017991	0.023068	1.2454
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.205267	0.263193	14.2093
Mexico	New Peso	0.071247	0.091353	4.9320
New Zealand	Dollar	0.570360	0.731315	39.4822
Norway	Kroner	0.123167	0.157925	8.5261
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013110	0.016810	0.9075
South Africa	Rand	0.129424	0.165948	8.9592
Korea	Won	0.000781	0.001001	0.0540
Sweden	Kroner	0.109083	0.139866	7.5511
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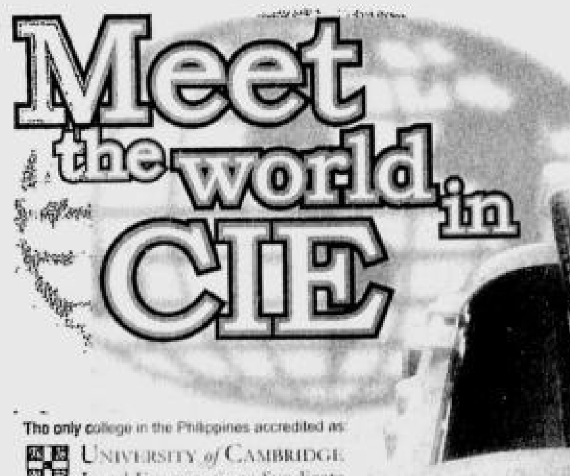

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BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	28	29.5	28	29	2,257,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	50.5	51.5	50	51.5	1,991,200
China Banking Corp.	800	800	780	800	10,130
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.69	0.71	0.69	0.7	2,210,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	47.5	48	47.5	48	197,200
International Exch. Bank	18.25	18.25	18.25	18.25	55,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	33.5	33.5	32	33	762,200
Phil. Bank of Comm. A	70	85	70	85	3,000
Philippine National Bank	32	33	32	33	8,400
Phil. Savings Bank	32	34	32	34	1,300
Security Bank Corp.	27.5	28	27.5	28	64,400
Union Bank of the Phil.	27.5	28.5	27.5	28.5	154,500
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	2450	2450	2450	2450	100
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	24,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1695	1695	1695	1695	1,090
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	14.5	14.5	14.25	14.25	9,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.14	1.18	1.14	1.18	6,029,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	840	860	840	855	71,490
Ipeople Inc.	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.2	64,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.4	3.45	3.4	3.45	1,972,000
Transpacific Broadcast	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	10,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1400	1435	1400	1435	136,310
Ivantage Corp.	0.68	0.68	0.66	0.66	450,000
Philweb Corp.	0.018	0.018	0.017	0.018	38,600,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	5,700
Manila Electric Co. B	24	24.75	24	24.5	510,800
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.1	6.2	6.1	6.2	3,896,000
Petron Corp.	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.7	4,365,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.16	1.22	1.16	1.22	205,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	200,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	20,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.6	7.8	7.6	7.8	5,379,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	200,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.65	0.7	0.65	0.68	2,860,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.2	3.5	3.2	3.5	1,392,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	20,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	4,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5	299,100
Jollibee Foods Corp.	29	29.5	29	29.5	628,500
RFM Corp.	0.84	0.84	0.83	0.83	150,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	70,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58	57.5	58	48,800
San Miguel Corp. B	84	85	84	84.5	195,500
Universal Robina Corp.	12	12.5	11.75	12.5	225,900
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	500,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0085	0.009	0.0085	0.009	22,000,000
Ayala Corp.	7.1	7.2	7	7.2	6,855,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	250,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.75	4.8	4.7	4.8	339,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.033	0.034	0.033	0.033	11,700,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.08	2.1	2.08	2.1	205,000
APC Group Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	910,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	10,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	13	13	12.75	12.75	6,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.02	1.08	1.02	1.08	20,150,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.15	0.15	300,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.22	0.235	0.22	0.23	1,990,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.34	0.36	0.34	0.35	5,990,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.6	2.95	2.6	2.95	7,399,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.03	0.036	0.03	0.035	13,400,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.34	1.36	1.34	1.36	431,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	8.3	9	8.3	8.9	2,121,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	47.5	50	47.5	50	1,027,900
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	570,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.0875	0.095	0.0875	0.0875	7,200,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.2	440,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.35	3.35	3.35	3.35	20,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.44	1.46	1.44	1.46	8,631,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.38	0.41	0.38	0.41	35,300,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	2,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	120,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.94	0.94	0.92	0.92	260,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	280,000
SM Investments Corp.	250	250	249	250	650,700
South China Resources Inc.	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63	100,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	2,000,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.215	0.215	0.12	0.15	7,470,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.26	400,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	16,000
Stanlal Manufacturing	0.13	0.13	0.125	0.125	580,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.24	1.28	1.24	1.26	7,258,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	10,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.5	1.54	1.5	1.5	1,830,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	14.75	14.75	14.5	14.75	168,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series R	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,900
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,900
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	5,500
PLDT 10% Pref Series Bb	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	7	7	6.9	6.9	8,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1	13,392,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	150,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	1,740,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.235	300,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.4	0.42	0.4	0.41	11,960,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.6	1.66	1.6	1.62	10,916,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	50,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	5	5.2	5	5.2	564,000
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.22	5,200,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.5	7.5	7.4	7.5	5,694,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0085	0.0085	0.008	0.0085	46,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	702,000
Benguet Corp. A	9.7	9.9	9.7	9.7	16,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	35,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.33	3,630,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.35	0.36	0.35	0.36	9,330,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	11,500,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.021	0.022	0.021	0.022	55,700,000
Omico Corp.	0.0075	0.0075	0.007	0.007	16,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.95	0.97	0.95	0.97	830,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.08	1.14	1.08	1.14	1,979,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	33	34	32.5	33.5	578,200
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	10,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	2,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	10,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.42	2.42	2.42	2.42	8,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.175	0.175	0.17	0.17	2,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	7,739,520	219,657,580.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	236,927,900	799,648,345.00
PRO	49,966,000	178,779,600.00
Mining	146,310,200	32,303,360.00
OIL	14,008,000	439,860.00
GRAND TOTALS :	454,951,620	1,231,088,745.00

	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	574.68	UP 10.45
Comm'l & Ind'l	3,058.85	UP 57.48
PRO	734.82	UP 7.23
Mining	2,835.16	UP 66.94
OIL	2.50	UP 0.05
SME	100.00	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	1,189.37	UP 17.43
Composite	1,946.77	UP 33.00

NO. OF ADVANCES: 61; NO. OF DECLINES: 24; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 32; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 117; NO. OF TRADES: 3,826

DISCLOSURES

ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. will hold an investors' and analysts' briefing on May 12, 3 p.m. at the Training Hall B, 13/F ELJ Communications Center, Sgt. Esguerra Ave., Q.C.

* * *

MABUHAY Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 27, 10 a.m. at the Mandarin Oriental Manila, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of April 15 are entitled to notice and vote at the meeting.

* * *

MANILA Water Company Inc. will hold an analysts' briefing to discuss its first quarter results on May 12, 10:30 a.m. at the Dasmariñas Room, Hotel Intercontinental, Makati City. The briefing will follow the annual stockholders' meeting at 9 a.m.

* * *

PHILIPPINE Telegraph and Telephone Corp. disclosed that it has received the subpoena from the Department of Justice requiring its officers Jose Santiago, Alice Arogo and Arturo Falco to submit to a preliminary investigation in relation to the complaint filed by the BIR for tax evasion.

* * *

SAN Miguel Corp. disclosed that Faustino Galang sold 72,600 of shares in the company. *Compiled by Erika Sarmiento, PDI Research*

PDIC fund seen to hit ₱90B in 7-8 years

By Doris C. Dumlao

PHILIPPINE Deposit Insurance Corp. will need about seven to eight more years to build up its deposit reserves to the ideal level of P90 billion, or more than double the current level of P41 billion.

PDIC executive vice president Imelda Singzon said that based on simulations of historical investment yields, PDIC would be able to reach the ideal level during the said period provided "there would be no big bank failures that would result in huge insurance claims."

Without the reforms that are now being implemented by the agency, PDIC said it would take it 10 to 15 years to reach the ideal deposit insurance fund (DIF) level.

The PDIC executive said there was a need to improve on the DIF yield, "that's why the agency made it a priority to boost its financial resource management sector."

"At the moment, we are restricted in terms of placements. If we are able to reallocate and raise a portion of that [DIF] through longer term instruments, as longer tenors enjoy higher yields, the better. We are looking at other risk-free instruments," Singzon said.

PDIC president Ricardo Tan said the agency had engaged a restructuring consultant six months ago to identify the reforms needed to ensure the agency's financial viability. Now, he said PDIC was beefing up its human infrastructure.

"By the end of this year we should show some improvement," Tan said, noting that PDIC was hoping to get an extra 50 basis points increase in its investment yields.

He said the average yield on the DIF was currently at 7 percent.

The PDIC has assumed a tougher role as deposit insurer and liquidator of defunct banks in view of charter amendments passed by Congress earlier.

The 12th Congress raised the maximum deposit insurance to P250,000 from P100,000 and restored PDIC's authority to independently examine banks subject to prior Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas approval.

The higher maximum deposit insurance coverage, which was last adjusted in 1992, factored in inflation and peso depreciation through the years.

But while the Congress raised the deposit insurance coverage ratio, lawmakers did not allow the PDIC to correspondingly hike the premium being collected from banks, which was currently pegged at 20 basis points of 1 percent of deposits.

PDIC was created through Republic Act No. 3591 in 1963 with the primary mandate of insuring deposits in Philippine banks. Its creation was precipitated by the closure of a number of banks in the early 1960s, prompting the then Central Bank of the Philippines (CBP) to initiate a legislation patterned after the US Federal Deposit Insurance Act.

Over the years, PDIC endured waves of bank failures, especially during the early 1980s when the country experienced severe economic and political turmoil.

Earlier, PDIC said it was alarmed over high-risk deposit-taking schemes being implemented by a number of banks. Such schemes are now under investigation for possible violation of rules against unsafe and unsound practices.

"This is a quasi-pyramiding scheme using PDIC as the fallguy, so we're trying to do something about it," Tan said.

Tan said some banks, which were offering double-your-money schemes or about 20 percent annual interest for five years, might be putting themselves and PDIC at risk.

Mr. Bearbull

From page B4

My 7-year-old daughter is witty, loving, artistic and terrible in math. She does not always pay attention because she is hyperactive so she is a throwback to my mother, but my relationship with both of them has always been wonderful. Fortunately, she has inherited my devastatingly good looks, skin color and sense of humor. She is top in English and wants to be a writer. At present, she is working on a collection of children's stories, beautifully illustrated, and 400 pages long, which she will finish by October. She is planning to sell the book to DISNEY, no kidding. She is dead serious about her project and has asked me to edit it. I get 10 percent. *mrbearbull@hotmail.com*

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Philippine National Bank

NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of the Philippine National Bank will be held on May 24, 2005 at 8:00 a.m. at the Ballroom, Upper Lobby, Century Park Hotel, 599 Pablo Ocampo Sr. St., Malate, Manila.

The Agenda for the meeting is as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Secretary's Proof of Notice and Quorum
3. Approval of the Minutes of the 2004 Annual Stockholders' Meeting held on May 25, 2004
4. Report of the President on the Results of Operations for the Year 2004
5. Approval of the 2004 Annual Report
6. Ratification of All Acts and Proceedings of the Board of Directors and Corporate Officers since the 2004 Annual Stockholders' Meeting
7. Election of Directors
8. Appointment of External Auditor
9. Other Matters
10. Adjournment

Minutes of the 2004 Annual Stockholders' Meeting as well as resolutions of the Board of Directors from May 25, 2004 will be available for examination during office hours at the Office of the Corporate Secretary.

Only stockholders of record as of April 25, 2005 will be entitled to notice of and vote at this meeting. Registration will begin at 6:00 a.m.

If you cannot personally attend the meeting, you may designate your authorized representative by submitting a PROXY to the Office of the Corporate Secretary not later than 5:00 p.m. on May 19, 2005. Any proxies so received will be validated on May 20, 2005, 9:30 a.m., at the Office of the Stock Transfer Agent at Allied Bank Center, 6754 Ayala Avenue, Makati City.

Pasay City, March 4, 2005

(SGD.) RENATO J. FERNANDEZ
Corporate Secretary

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DISTINGUISHED FACULTY

Prof. Tommy B. Lopez teaches marketing subjects in enterprise and development management courses of AIM. He is the Institute Guru of services marketing and the emerging field of one-to-one marketing.

Prof. Jose Jesus F. Roces specializes in Marketing, Finance and Human Resource Development. He is the first Filipino to head the Asia Pacific Marketing Federation.

Prof. Ronald T. Chua is the Academic Champion of the MBA –Micro-finance initiative at AIM. He teaches Operations Management, Finance, Marketing and Market Research, Product Development, and Program and Project Development and Management.

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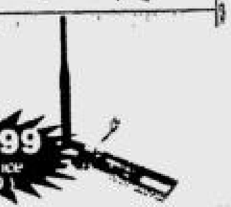

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Editor Aries Espinosa

Listerine conferred with two prestigious consumer awards

HONORED for notable excellence in marketing practices, Listerine Mouthwash was recently conferred one of the top awards in the highly prestigious Philippine Marketing Excellence Awards, held recently at the Westin Philippine Plaza.

The esteemed award-giving body, led by the Philippine Marketing Excellence Awards Institute Inc, the Asian Institute of Marketing and Entrepreneurship, and Sales and Marketing Magazine, named Listerine Mouthwash as the "Most Outstanding Mouthwash Brand" in the National Awards category. This puts the popular oral care brand alongside other benchmark companies and products.

The Philippine Marketing Excellence Awards recognizes outstanding companies that have exhibited best marketing practices that lead to market dominance, goodwill, high-level customer confidence and market acceptability. The awardees are voted by consumers and marketing professionals through surveys, focus group discussions and market research using criteria such as market dominance, market awareness, innovative marketing practices, publicity generated in the Mass Media, customer service orientation, product/service quality, value pricing, truthfulness in advertising, customer confidence, other awards received and overall market acceptability.

Similarly, Listerine PocketPaks - another leading Pfizer brand - received recognition from the equally prestigious Anvil Awards for its launch campaign, which included creative, media, trade and sampling efforts.

Considered as the "Oscars" of the PR industry, the Anvil Award is a much-coveted and highly prestigious recognition given in the field of Public Relations by the Public Relations Society of the Philippines (PRSP). The stringent selection process is determined by a tough criteria which requires a campaign to be of public interest, lasting impact and value to its audience.

Mannette Razon of the Oral Care Category of Pfizer Consumer Healthcare says, "We are truly honored to be given recognition for these programs and efforts. This means that we did not only make people's lives better with our products, but also helped shape social values through our different campaigns. These awards will serve as inspiration for us to continue making a difference in every Filipino's life."

With two prestigious awards under its belt, the efficacy of Pfizer's Listerine Mouthwash and Listerine PocketPaks is not only backed-up by scientific results, but by consumer and industry confidence as well.

Tribute to the Pillars of Marketing Excellence

SHOWN in photo are (from left) Dr.Felix Lao Jr (dean of the Asian Institute of Marketing and Entrepreneurship), Mannette Razon (Pfizer's Oral Care Category) receiving the award, Fanny Serrano, and Donald Lim (national president of the Philippine Marketing Association).

Chowking
CNN

TESSIE TOMAS GIVES TALK AT CHOWKING 2005 SALES CONVENTION

Veteran actress and comedian, Tessie Tomas takes a moment to pose for a picture with the Underline creative team who managed the highly successful Chowking 2005 Sales Convention. Tomas gave an entertaining talk about delighting customers. Underline, the BTL arm of JimenezBasic Advertising, is one of the country's innovators in the BTL communications field.

EASTON PLACE CONDO CONDUCTS FIRE DRILL

Easton Place Condominium, developed by Vernida Realty Development Corp (VRDC) recently held successful fire prevention and safety ground and aerial drill exercises last March 11 in participation of the Makati Fire Department, Philippine Air Force 505 Search and Rescue Team, Ospital ng Makati and Makati Rescue.

AD FOUNDATION, CINEMALAYA SIGN MOA

The Advertising Foundation of the Philippines, the social development institution of Philippine advertising recently signed a partnership agreement with 'CineMalaya Film Festival 2005' executive committee, chaired by the Cultural Center of the Philippines on the marketing of the 1st Philippine Independent Film Festival to be held on July 2005 at the CCP. Present in the Memorandum of Agreement signing designating Advertising Foundation as 'CineMalaya' marketing arm in partnership with Alpha One Communications as 'CineMalaya' events coordinator, were (from left): Ed Lejano of the UP Film Institute; Laurice Guillen Feleo of the Film Development Council of the Philippines; businessman-philantrophist Antonio Cojuangco, the biggest supporter-patron of independent films; CCP president Nestor Jardin as chair of 'CineMalaya' Festival; Optimum Media Board chair Antonio Samson, board chair of the Advertising Foundation of the Philippines; Procter & Gamble Phils president Johnip Cua, board secretary of Ad Foundation; and Robbie Tan of the Film Development Commission of the Philippines.

SENTRO WINS AWARD FROM AYALA MALLS

Sentro, a member of the Chateau 1771 Group of Restaurants located in plush Greenbelt 3, recently received for the second consecutive year, the Store Operations Excellence award given by the Ayala Land. The award gives recognition to Sentro's successful adherence to Ayala Malls Property Management standards and its commitment to the management's benchmark for customer service. Since its opening in 2002, Sentro has consistently performed well in delivering excellent food and impeccable service. The Modern Filipino Cuisine Experience approach of restaurateur, Ricky Gutierrez (left), and the ingenuity of Chef Vicky Rose Pacheco (right) keep gourmets and gourmands thrilled with such wild and witty creations as Sinigang na Corned Beef, Catfish Sentro Style, Rated:GG, Tomato Kesong Puti Salad, Sizzling Tofu and Coffee Pie to name a few. Sentro continues to break barriers by re-inventing time-honored recipes while remaining steadfast to the multi-layered flavors of traditional Filipino cookery. In the process, it has made Pinoy cuisine more exciting, more relevant to today's tastes. And the award from the Ayala Malls certainly reinforces the correctness of Sentro's vision: to bring the lutong Pinoy into the new millennium and beyond.

Giving new meaning to multi-function

IF YOU want to talk multi-function, here is one hotel that could fit the bill. You want a venue of just the right size, not overflowing. It must be somewhere private and secure, but not too stifling. You want to get down to business but with your sleeves rolled up for the deal. Your team has to come up with a strategy together but they need to sleep on it, too. And it is crucial for your conference participants to hear you and get your point. What do you do when the boss is in a hurry and needs to see your division's eight ideas in a flash? Can you work online in the coffee shop? Not a problem to any of the above. Business anywhere is right here in The Legend Villas.

Located along Pioneer Street in Mandaluyong, The Legend Villas has redefined function rooms into multi-function venues that suit your business and even leisure needs. The Legend Villas offers the same impeccable service displayed throughout Legend Hotels International Corp, the only 100 percent Filipino-owned hotel chain. Every guest services officer, meeting room services officer and technical staff is trained to meet your needs efficiently. They treat you as honored guests in what could practically be your own home.

The Legend Villas currently has 3 function rooms and 1 ballroom with more function rooms coming by the end of the year. Three new function rooms and one new ballroom divisible to 3 more function rooms will soon be completed.

While the smallest function room can host a meeting of 10 to 12 people, it can also be expanded to accommodate much larger events.

Function rooms are assigned a meeting services officer who can provide secretarial services in an efficient and non-intrusive manner. Waiters and technical service staff are just a service call button away for those engaged in confidential meetings that must not be disturbed.

Function rooms are equipped with WiFi connectivity and data ports for your computer's Net connection. A professional audio system with cable microphone or lapel microphone is available. Plus, there are various tools for presentations - overhead projector, projection screen, easel stand, glass marking board, TV, CD/VCD/DVD or even VHS player and cassette deck player. Upon request, the function room can also be equipped with a paper reader, so as not to transfer paper presentations to acetate; high-end speakers with mixer system to ensure high quality audio throughout your function, and the octopus hub, an eight-channel wireless hub that allows up to eight laptops to be connected and multimedia presentations subsequently projected without having to plug and unplug each laptop.

If you'd like to surf the Net for ideas or check mail over a flavorful Filipino dish your grandma used to make, then Lola Maria, the hotel's coffee shop known for international flavors and home-style Filipino cooking, is the place to be. The restaurant is a WiFi hotspot for easy Net connection.

But what about having to let your team stay in for the early morning breakfast presentation to industry colleagues? The Legend Villas has resolved that with perfectly planned Team Suites and Family Rooms. Both accommodations can comfortably have at least four guests in spacious rooms with their own beds.

If holding business meetings was a cinch, imagine more personal events like your teenager's debut, a wedding reception or a birthday party. The Legend Villas can handle that and more. Your being an honored guest is their business.

For inquiries, interested parties may call (632) 633-1501 to 10 or visit www.legendvillas.com.ph.

92 nominees vie for Metrobank Cops

NINETY-TWO nominees for the 2005 Metrobank Foundation's search for the Country's Outstanding Policemen in Service (Cops) were received, representing around 50 percent increase over that of last year's, according to Gener Mendoza, project director of the Rotary Club of New Manila East (RCNME) - Metrobank Foundation's partner in the search. Meanwhile, three Rotarian dignitaries from District 3780 have accepted invitation for them to be among the members of the COPS selection committee. They are: past district governor Mar Nery; RC of Kamuning president Philip Soriano; and RC of Kagitingan-Cubao president Dulce Coyukiat. They will be joined by others from the Philippine National Police and other sectors to comprise the pre-judging panel that will choose the 20 finalists. A cash prize of P150,000 and a trophy await each of ten winners in the project, which is sponsored by the Metrobank Foundation Inc in cooperation with the RCNME and the PNP. Six of them are non-commissioned officers (with two policewomen among them), and four commissioned officers up to the rank of police superintendent. MBFI and RCNME are being assisted in the search by all Metrobank branches nationwide and 17 Rotary clubs from all over the Philippines - most of them its sister clubs. Several from the 85 clubs within District 3780 are also supporting the project. MBFI executive vice president Aniceto Sobrepeña said that the final board of judges is being drawn from among prominent media personalities, educators, government officials and the like. Awarding ceremonies will be in Malacañang, planned in late June.

ALAXAN LAUNCHES ALIS ARAY SA HANAPBUHAY

Alaxan, the country's leading brand in pain relief recently launched an activity dubbed as 'Alis Aray sa Hanapbuhay'. This is a free symposium that aims to educate and empower the Filipino workers of different industries by giving them useful tips and information about pain management. The symposiums are being conducted in different industries in the Greater Manila Area and are set to run for the entire year. Among the 1st batch of industries visited by the activity are Epson, SPI Laguna and Taguig, Samsung Electronics, SKI Construction Group Inc and Lee towers. If you want your company to be the next venue of the symposium, call Ad Staunch Communication Network at (02)550-1732 or email at events@compass.com.ph. Photo shows employees of Samsung Electronics together with guest speaker Dr. Mona Dimacangan (3rd from left) along with the Alaxan team headed by professional marketing - Rodel Magsalin and Liel Dizon.

Dr. Alfiler is 2005's Most Outstanding Pediatrician

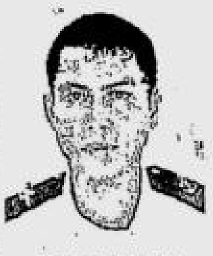
DR. CARMELO A. Alfiler

THE PHILIPPINE Pediatric Society Inc (PPS) conferred its highest recognition, the Most Outstanding Pediatrician Award on Dr. Carmelo A. Alfiler, on the occasion of its 42nd Annual Convention on April 24 to 27. Dr. Alfiler was cited for all around competence, excellence, leadership and achievements in various fields of Pediatrics - academic, clinical, research, governance, community and extension services - nationally and internationally. Dr. Alfiler was president of National Philippine Pediatric Society (PPS) in 2000-2002 and is currently the director of the Philippine General Hospital, University of the Philippines Manila and the secretary general of the Asian Pediatric Nephrology Association.

TRAINING & THE FILIPINO SEAFARER

The OWWA's Seafarers' Upgrading Program

Filipino Seafarers: The Preferred Choice



Victor Andres

Sonny Taladiar

Victor G. Andres, 27, is a happy man. His wife is giving birth to his second child this July. In a few weeks, he will board his ship sporting a new position title (he has been promoted to Able Seaman) and he looks forward to his new assignment with pure, unadulterated excitement.

An ordinary seaman in his previous trips abroad, Victor has just completed a ten-day training on Radar Observation Using an Automatic Radar Positioning Aid (ARPA). The training was free because he availed of the Seafarers' Upgrading Program (SUP) of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, or the OWWA. *"Malaki ang naitutulong sa aming mga seaman ng SUP. Katulad ko,dati akong OS (Ordinary Seaman) pero na-promote dahil sa training. Pagbaba ko, magsasanay uli ako. Kasapi naman ako ng OWWA,"* Victor said in a phone interview.

Sonny L. Taladiar, 30, is a ship cook. Like Victor, he availed of an SUP grant and trained on Advanced Baking because of his position in a luxury ship. He is a Pastry Chef. *"Malaki ang pasasalamat ko sa OWWA sa oportunidad na makapagsanay ng libre,"* Sonny said. *"Magagamit ko ang aking natutunan upang umangat sa buhay,"* he added.

Sonny and Victor were two of the 1,273 Filipino seafarers who availed of the SUP grants from January to April this year. In 2004, the OWWA sent 1,877 Filipino seafarers to train in various maritime courses for free. *"We will strive to increase the number this year. We owe it to our seafarers to give them the best training because they are the best,"* OWWA Administrator Marianito D.Roque said.

World-class

At any given time, there are about 200,000 Filipino seafarers onboard various global shipping fleets. In fact, Filipino seafarers now comprise more than 28 percent of all seafarers manning over 51,000 of the world's ocean-going vessels. Ship owners all over the world prefer Filipino seafarers, who have proven many times their competence, high-quality seamanship, adaptability, resiliency, English-proficiency, and loyalty. The government recognizes the value and contribution of the Filipino seafarers to the development of the country that it continues to invest in their training to ensure that they meet the highest global maritime standards, to enhance their long-term employability, and to sustain their reputation as the preferred choice of maritime employers.

Seafarers' Upgrading Program

Course and Number of Availees
Calendar Year 2004

Course	No. of Availees
Welding	354
Advanced Firefighting	206
GOC/GMDSS	176
Marine Pollution	171
Cargo Handling & Care	128
Ship Simulator and Bridge Teamwork	117
Engine Room Simulator	66
Medical Care	58
Medical Emergency and First Aid	58
Proficiency in Survival Craft	56
Lathe Machine Course	54
Shipboard Culinary	49
Specialized Training in Oil Tanker	39
Crowd Management	31
Radar Observer with ARPA	29
Catering Management	28
Hazardous Material	25
Special Cuisine	24
Baking	23
ECDIS	22
Specialized Training in Chemical Tanker	22
General Tanker Familiarization	19
Deckwatchkeeping	14
International Cooking	13
Crisis Management	12
Trim and Stability	12
International Cuisine	11
Radio Simulator Course	11
Specialized Training in Liquefied Gas Tanker	10
Advance Baking	5
ARPA	4
Electrotechnology	4
Galley Provision	4
Refrigeration and Airconditioning	4
Auxiliary Machine	3
Engine Watchkeeping	3
Shore-based Firefighting	3
Advance Bartending	2
COW/IGS	2
Stewarding Course	2
Control Engineering	1
PADAMS	1
Proficiency in Fast Rescue Boat	1
Total	1,877

The OWWA as the seafarers' partner

The OWWA is a partner of Filipino seafarers in education and skills enhancement. Its SUP is geared toward improving the Filipino seafarers' capability in meeting the stringent demands of the maritime industry. The SUP is a scholarship grant that provides job-related training in priority maritime training courses identified by the Maritime Training Council. Its objective is to upgrade knowledge, update skills, and develop the expertise of seafarers in accord with modern technology and the latest global maritime standards.

SUP availment requirements

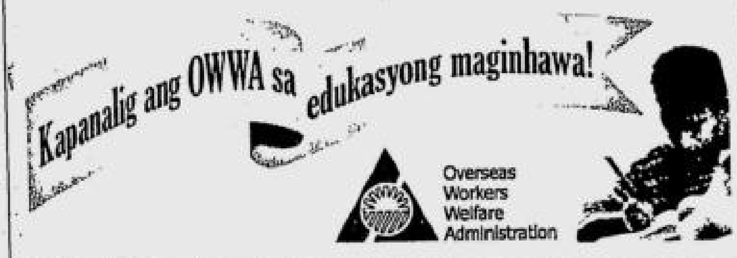
A training grant ranging from P1,200 to P7,500 is offered under the SUP to all Filipino seafarers who are active OWWA members. A grantee may re-avail of the grant but subsequent availments could be done only after payment of additional three (3) membership contributions and if the training is availed of within the prescribed period. Applicants must only submit the following requirements: 1) accomplished application form; 2) original copy of Seaman's Identification and Record Book; 3) two copies of 1" x 1" photograph; and 4) latest residence certificate.

The Seafarers' Upgrading Program is one of four education benefit packages the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration or the OWWA, as the government's lead membership welfare institution, offers to overseas Filipino workers and their dependents. The three others are the Congressional Migrant Workers Scholarship Program, Education for Development Scholarship Program, and Skills-for-Employment Scholarship Program. All these programs provide financial grants-in-aid for tuition and other school fees, monthly stipend, and certain allowances.

For application forms, visit the OWWA Regional Offices nearest you or the OWWA Head Office at theOWWA Center, F.B. Harrison corner 7th Street, Pasay City. For inquiries or requests for detailed information, call, fax, or text:

OWWA Hotline:	**551-1560 or 551-6641**
Facsimile:	**833-01-87**
Telephones:	**891-7601 to 24**
Mobile:	**0917-898-699**

Read more about the Scholarship Programs and/or the OWWA on the website www.owwa.gov.ph.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PORO POINT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
A Subsidiary of Bases Conversion Development Authority

PORO POINT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION INVITATION FOR PROPOSALS FOR NEGOTIATION

Asset Disposition Program

The Poro Point Management Corporation (PPMC) is informing the public that on April 14, 2005, the Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC) declared a Failure of Bidding for the development and privatization of the 65.5 hectares Tourism Complex and 40-hectare Airport Area covering an approximate area of one hundred five and a half (105.5) hectares. The reason for the Failure of Bidding is that there is only one (1) proponent and only International Thunderbird Gaming Corporation has been pre-qualified to participate in the bidding and negotiation process pursuant to SBAC rules and regulations.

In view of the foregoing, we are now inviting Interested Proponents to participate in the negotiations for the development and privatization of the 65.5 hectares Tourism Complex and 40-hectare Airport Area covering an approximate area of one hundred five and a half (105.5) hectares.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) for the negotiations which outline the requirements for pre-qualification and submission of proposals, among others, are available to interested proponents at the PPMC Office at Pennsylvania Avenue, Poro Point, San Fernando City, La Union on May 2, 2005 up to May 13, 2005 from Mondays thru Fridays, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. A non-refundable cost of the TOR is PhP 20,000.00 payable to PPMC in Cash or Manager's Check.

Interested proponents may submit their Letters of Interest, the documentary requirements, and their proposals on or before May 20, 2005 until 3:00 p.m.

Interested proponents can direct their inquiries to:

THE CHAIRMAN
SBAC COMMITTEE
Poro Point Management Corporation
Poro Point Special Economic and Freeport Zone
Pennsylvania Avenue, Poro, San Fernando City
La Union

or they can contact Ms. Josefa Catherine T. Bada at telephone numbers (072) 242-4016 or (072) 888-5956 or send e-mail at ppmc@sflu.com.

(Sgd.) ATTY. ANTHONY C. MANGUIAT
Chairman
SBAC Committee

(PDI - April 29, May 2 & 10, 2005)

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GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

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PETS

BEAGLE PUPS 09106761055

DOG TRAINER 0919-3419012

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Labor and Employment
National Wages and Productivity Commission
REGIONAL TRIPARTITE WAGES AND PRODUCTIVITY BOARD
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing on the matter of minimum wage adjustment in the National Capital Region is hereby set by the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board – National Capital Region (RTWPB-NCR) on 25 May 2005, 1:00 p.m. Occupational Safety and Health Center (OSHC), OSHC Complex, North Avenue corner Science Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

All interested parties who may wish to present their position/opposition on the matter are enjoined to attend the public hearing and may file their position papers with the Board on or before the schedule date of hearing at the RTWPB-NCR Secretariat Room 11-C, 11th Floor, G.E. Antonino Building, cor. T.M. Kalaw & J. Bocobo Streets, Ermita, Manila or send through telefax number 527-51-55 or email address: wage_ncr@pacific.net.ph

(Sgd.) **RICARDO S. MARTINEZ SR., CESO III**
Regional Board Chairman

(PDI--May 10, 2005)

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PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given that the 52 Card w/lic. #11867 under the name of Matilde R. Leyva MD was Lost (PDI-May 5, 2005)

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PUBLIC NOTICES

PERSONAL

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HOLY SPIRIT

Holy Spirit thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no matter how great the material desires may be. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your Perpetual Glory. Amen.
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Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES BOARD

FREEDOM TO BUILD, INC.
Applicant
Case No. 05-991
x-------------------x

NOTICE OF HEARING

Applicant, authorized operator of the waterworks system within Dela Costa II, Novaliches, Caloocan City, requests for authority to increase its rates:

Consumption Blocks	Proposed Rates
0-10 cu m	P127.00 (min. charge)
11-20 cu m.	13.00 cu m
21-30 cu m.	13.40 cu m.
Over 30 cu m	13.80 cu m

Notice is hereby given that this application will be heard by the Board on May 30, 2005 at 1:30 in the afternoon at the NWRB-WUD, Conference Room, 8th Flr., NIA Bldg., EDSA, Quezon City at which time Applicant shall present its evidence.

At least fifteen (15) days prior to the scheduled hearing, Applicant shall publish this notice once in one (1) daily newspaper of general circulation in Metro Manila and serve by personal delivery or registered mail a copy of (i) the application and its attachments, and (ii) this notice to all affected parties appearing on page 2 hereof.

Parties opposed to the granting of the application must file their written opposition supported by documentary evidence on or before the above hearing, furnishing a copy of the same to the Applicant.

Failure on the part of any affected party to file his opposition on time and to appear at the hearing will be construed as a waiver of his right to be heard, and the Board will proceed to hear and decide the application based on the evidence submitted.

Failure by the applicant to appear at the hearing shall amount to lack of interest on its part and the instant application shall be dismissed accordingly.

Witness the Honorable Chairman of the National Water Resources Board this 3rd day of May 2005.

By Authority of the Board
(Sgd.) RAMON B. ALIKPALA
Executive Director

(PDI--May 10, 2005)

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OBITUARIES

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"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."

— 2 Corinthians 5:8

CARMEN FLORO VDA. DE ALDEGUER

Peacefully joined our Lord on May 8, 2005 at the age of 89.

Her husband **Equing** (†); children **Bobby** and **Myrna**, **Jing**, **Skippy** and **Bel**, **Rene**, **Norma Jean**, **Frankie** and **Dory**, **Vic** and **Baby**, **Rudy** and **Becka**, and **Karen** (†) and sister **Lita F. Papa**; grandchildren, great grandchildren, in-laws, nephews and nieces and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at La Funeraria Paz Sucat, Parañaque City.

Interment details will be announced later.

"Let the words of my mouth meet your Favor, keep the thoughts of my heart before you, Lord, my rock, my redeemer..."

— Psalm 21:15

Salvacion Abrenica Diaz

Died in the Grace of our Lord on May 8, 2005 at the age of 85

She is preceded in death by her husband **Gilberto** and son **Gil (Mits)**. She is survived by her children, **Jasmin**, **Gilberto Jr. (Chito)** and **Gilda Salvacion (Gitchi)**; her beloved grandchildren, **Francis Gil**, **Ma. Hiyasmin**, **Juan Paolo**, **Gabriel Teodoro**, **Constancio Antonio IV**, **Ma. Esperanza**, **Ma. Consuelo** and **Viktor**; her faithful and trusted companion, **Ma Juling**, her dear sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law; and loving nieces and nephew.

Her body lies in state at the Mortuary of the San Nicolas de Tolentino (SNDT) Parish, Neptune Street, Congressional Subdivision, Quezon City. Interment will be on May 12, 2005 at the Holy Cross Memorial Park in Novaliches, Quezon City after the 9:00 AM Mass at SNDT.

Dominus Est!

It is the Lord!
John 21:7

The Religious of the Assumption
of the
Philippines~Thailand Province

recommend to your prayers

Sister Maria Angela de Jésus Crucifié

Maria Angela Trinidad Ansaldo y Quintos

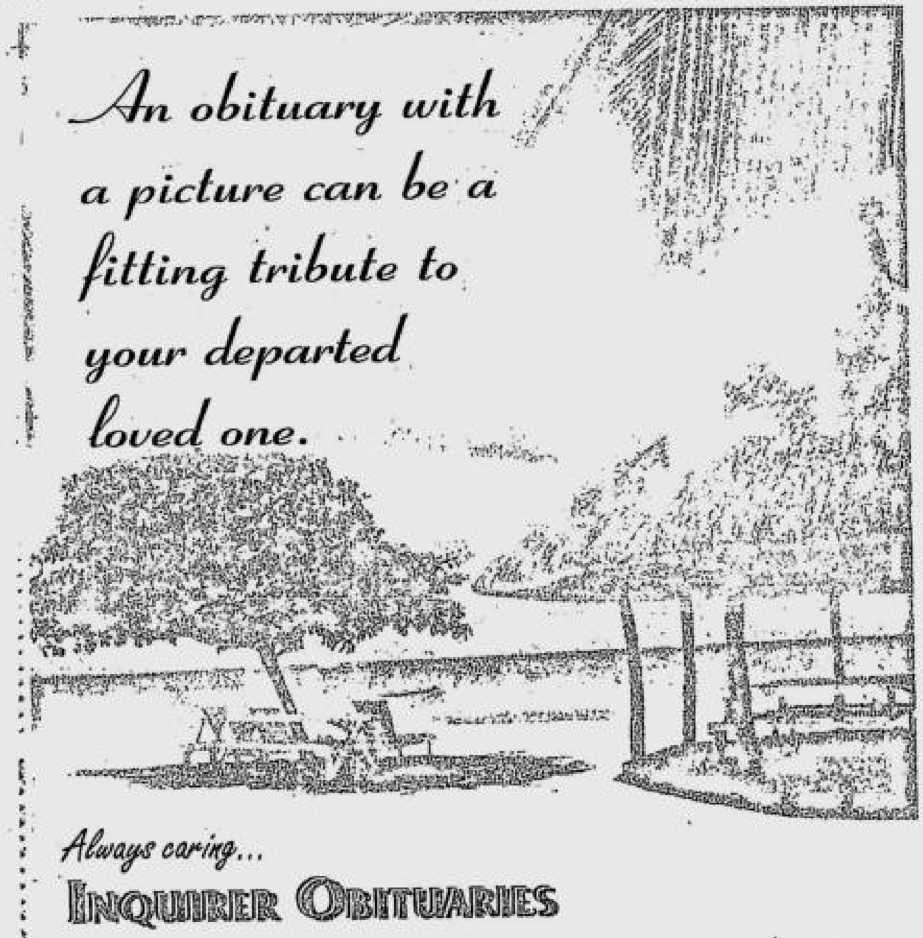
First Filipina Provincial Superior
First Filipina Mistress of Formation

who returned to the Father
on Ascension Sunday
8 May 2005

at the age of 89
in her
65th Year of Religious Profession

Funeral Mass
Wednesday, 11 May 2005
8 o'clock in the morning
Main Chapel
Assumption, San Lorenzo

In lieu of flowers please make a contribution to the Formation Fund that will be put up in her honor.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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)
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"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

— John 3:16

CLASSIFIEDS

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
METRO COTABATO WATER DISTRICT
Cotabato City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Metro Cotabato Water District invites interested and legitimate Suppliers/parties to submit bid proposal (2 sealed envelopes) for the following projects:

BID NO.		NAME OF PROJECT	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT
01	1 lot	Supply, delivery and installation of electric motors and its assemblies for flocculator and rapid mixer drives, motor controls complete with standard accessories, rapid mixers and flocculators or as per technical specifications and drawings.	Php. 2,873,641.66
02	2 lots	Supply, delivery, and installation of dosing pump, motor controls complete with standard accessories as per technical specifications and drawing.	Php. 880,000.00
	2 lots	Supply, delivery and installation of Polyethaylene (PE) tank complete with stirrer, stirrer controls and other accesories as shown on plans and as specified.	

Interested parties may secure Bid Documents and Detailed Specifications upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 500.00 during office hours at Metro Cotabato Water District, Governor Gutierrez Avenue, Cotabato City with Tel. Nos. (064) 4213568 / 4211070.

The schedule of bidding activities is as follows:

PARTICULAR	DATE/TIME
Issuance of Bid Documents	May 18 to 26, 2005
Opening/Submission of bids	June 01, 2005

The criteria to be used by BAC in the eligibility check of prospective bidders shall be on non-discretionary "Pass / Fail" basis.

The MCWD reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the MCWD. The MCWD likewise assumes no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that the award shall be made.

(Sgd.) **MANUEL D. MAGDAEL**
Chairperson
Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI-May 10 & 17, 2005)

AUCTION

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BOTTLING MACHINERY - KALISH Bandit 5400 Bottle Neck Bander; KALIS Kalisort-200 7430 Bottle Unscrambler; GARVEY 1500 Bottle Accumulator; MCBRADY Orbit 100 Bottle Ringer;
ELECTRIC MOTORS, GEARS & PUMPS - BROOK HANSEN 7R-AD280M 300HP Induction Motor; BROOK HANSEN P4 OVRE2-CDN-18 Large Capacity Gear Box; FUJI 5HP Induction Motor; APV 40HP Canned Motor Pump
COMPUTER NETWORKING & ACCESSORIES - D-LINK Card Bus Adapters; XIRCOM Real Ethernet Ports; Desktop Servers; 3COM Dual Speed Switches; HP 9600 Series CD-Writers; PC Cards
OFFICE FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT - Modular Work Stations; Swivel Office Chairs; Wooden Desks; CRT Monitors
MISCELLANEOUS - SHARP VALEO 14" Television Sets; OKIWA Belt Conveyors; Boltless Racking Systems; WELBILT W-150 Varimixer Commercial Food Mixers; NAGASE ALFA LAVAL Machine; LAB-LINE Stability Oven; HIOS CLT Power Supply Boxes; HAKKO 940B Temperature Controllers; SEM-604 0.5mm Thread Solder Wires; Digital Weighing Scales; Assorted Household Accessories etc.

On View: Monday 16th May 2005 - 9am to 5pm & morning of sale day
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Please bring valid ID to be presented during registration
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INVITATION TO BID

The **PHILIPPINE RECLAMATION AUTHORITY (PRA)** is inviting interested parties to participate in the public bidding for the sale or lease of eleven (11) lots on a serviced land basis, located at the Central Business Park 1 A. Bay City (formerly known as Boulevard 2000), Pasay City, for mixed use or commercial development purposes.

1. Properties for sale or lease:

BLK	LOT		AREA (sq.m.)	MODE
A1	1	corner	3,843	SALE
A2	1	corner	3,462	SALE
A2	2	interior	2,568	SALE
A2	3	interior	2,611	SALE
A2	4	interior	2,573	SALE
A2	5	corner	3,321	SALE
A3	1	corner	2,500	SALE
A3	2	interior	2,222	SALE
B4		portion	5,825	SALE OR LEASE
B7		portion	4,648	SALE OR LEASE
B5		portion	18,348	SALE OR LEASE

2. Qualified bidders:
   Sale : Any Filipino citizen, of legal age; any government owned or controlled corporations and any government financial institution or any public corporation, which have complied with the requirements established by PRA for this bidding.
   Lease : Any Filipino citizen, of legal age; any partnership, association or corporation, public or private of which at least 60% of the capital stock or of any interest in said capital stock belongs wholly to citizens of the Philippines and which is organized and constituted under the laws of the Philippines.
3. Interested qualified parties may obtain the Terms of Reference and Bid Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of FIVE THOUSAND PESOS (P5,000.00) in cash or Manager's/Cashier's Check starting May 11 until May 24, 2005 from 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM (Monday to Thursday) at the Marketing Department, 7th Floor Legaspi Towers 200, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City, MM.
4. Required pre-qualification documents and duly accomplished Bid Documents prescribed in the Terms of Reference shall be submitted to the PRA Real Estates Bids and Awards Committee (PREBAC) on 25 May 2005 on or before 12:00 NN. Public opening of bids shall follow at 1:30 PM of the same day.
6. For further information, inquiries may be made to the Marketing Department in the above address at telephone numbers 817-4711 to 13 (trunk line) and 813-7103 to 7104 (direct lines).

(Sgd.) **TEODORICO C. TAGUINOD**
General Manager/CEO

(PDI-May 10 & 17, 2005)

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BUSINESS

RP taps international bond market anew to raise $750M

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT will auction off $500 million to $750 million worth of sovereign bonds maturing in 2015 and 2030 to raise cash for its expenditures this year.

This will be the second time the Philippines will tap the international bond market this year. The first, which was the country's single biggest issue recorded so far, was in January when it sold $1.5 billion worth of 25-year bonds.

National Treasurer Omar Cruz said the bonds would be traded in the next few days and that the government had tapped JP Morgan, Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corp. and Deutsche Bank as underwriters for the debt offering. Pricing of the bonds is expected later on Monday during New York trading hours.

Cruz said the country would initially look at generating $500 million from the bond issue, although it could go up to $750 million should there be a huge market for the bonds.

The government plans to borrow a total of $4 billion this year from the foreign market to fund the budget deficit, which is estimated to reach P180 billion by the end of the year, and to pay maturing obligations.

The bond launch will come amid final deliberations of the value-added tax (VAT) bill in the bicameral conference committee of Congress.

The Department of Finance earlier said the passage of the VAT bill was expected to improve market sentiment on the Philippines because the measure would substantially ease the country's fiscal problem. The bill, if enacted into law, is estimated to generate P60 billion to P80 billion in additional revenue a year.

Saying the government is losing at least P167 million for each day of delay in the passage of the VAT measure, the DOF has called on Congress to finally wrap up its discussions on the VAT bill.

Although there had been a deadlock between the Lower House and the Senate over their respective versions of the VAT bill, a compromise is seen to be approved in the next few days.

The Lower House agreed to the lifting of several VAT exemptions and a hike in the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent, while the Senate opted to keep the VAT rate at 10 percent and instead raise corporate income tax rate from 32 to 35 percent.

The proposed compromise is to keep the VAT rate at 10 percent, increase corporate income tax rate to 35 percent, and give President Macapagal-Arroyo a standby authority to raise the VAT rate if certain fiscal targets are not met.

Aboitiz holding firm posts 42% profit rise

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

HOLDING firm Aboitiz Equity Ventures (AEV) yesterday said its net income for January to March surged 42 percent to P626 million.

The growth came mainly from its power generation and distribution businesses.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), AEV said its power group accounted for the bulk of the first quarter income or a total of P569 million. This was 160 percent higher than the year-ago level. It said both the power distribution and generation companies posted a robust performance.

AEV's banking subsidiaries chipped in P298 million to the total income, up 73 percent from the same period last year.

The transport group, through Aboitiz Transport System Corp., however, bucked the positive performance, reporting a net loss after tax of P167.2 million, due largely to higher fuel costs and lower revenue.

Aboitiz Transport's revenue was down 4 percent from year-ago level. The rate increases implemented in October last year and January this year were not enough to recover the additional costs brought about by the rising prices of fuel.

Freight operations contributed approximately 53 percent of ATSC's revenue during the quarter, with the balance coming from passage operations.

ATSC said it was working on several initiatives to bring down its operating cost.

AEV's Pilmico Foods Corp. contributed P112 million, an increase of 8 percent.

As of end-March, AEV's total assets amounted to P34 billion. The company paid cash dividends worth P597 million in March.

TOYOTA'S Fortuner seen to boost market appetite for sports vehicles.

SUV sales seen growing

By Ronnel W. Domingo

INDUSTRY leader Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. yesterday said it was expecting local sports utility vehicle market to grow with the introduction of its Fortuner, the last of three models under its innovative international multipurpose vehicle (IMV) program.

TMPC had launched the Hilux pickup last December and the Innova multipurpose vehicle last February, with the latter kicking up sales for the commercial vehicle segment in the first two months of market entry.

Company first vice president Daniel M. Isla said TMPC was expecting to sell 300 units of the Fortuner monthly. Fortuner will be imported from Thailand.

Isla said the SUV segment had been the strongest in terms of growth for the company, as well as for the entire local automotive industry.

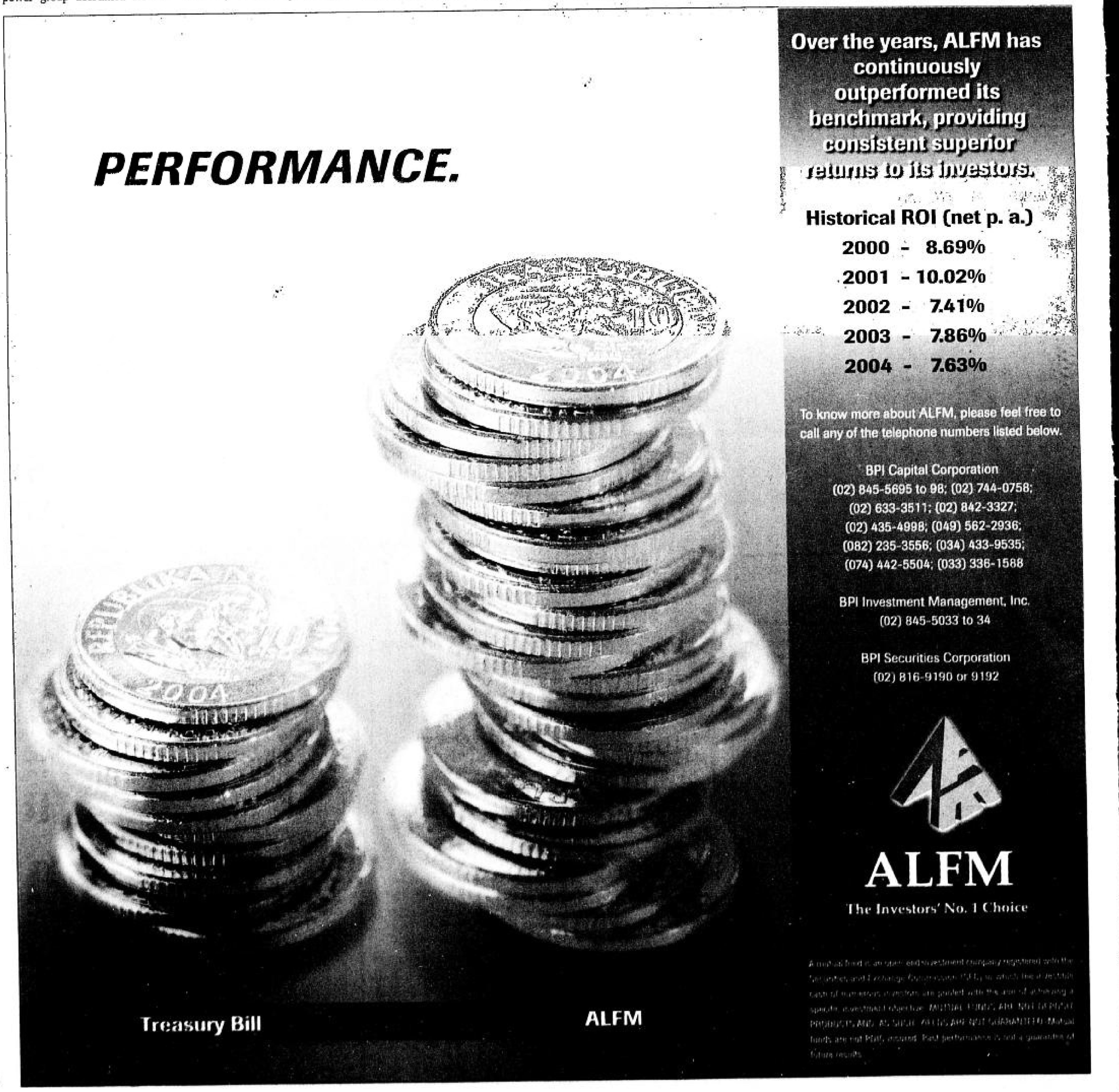
He said the Fortuner was also seen to eat up on the market share of mid-sized passenger cars, including Camry.

In a prepared statement, TMPC said its newest SUV was developed "in line with the IMV project's global quality standards that aim to produce vehicles that appeal to various markets around the world."

The firm explained that SUVs evolved from the cross-country vehicles of the 1960s to the ones of the 1990s.

The Fortuner would be competing with Mitsubishi's Pajero, Outlander and Montero; Nissan's Patrol and X-trail; Isuzu's Trooper; Ford's Expedition, Explorer, Escape and Everest; Mazda's Tribute; GM's Tahoe, Trailblazer, Suburban and Forester; and Kia's Sorento.

The new model will be available starting May 14 with automatic transmission only—the 3-liter, diesel-run version priced at about P1.5 million and the 2.7-liter, gasoline-fed version at about P1.2 million.



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Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

DUNKIN' DONUTS
SLABSTERS
PEANUT BUTTER FLAVORED TREAT WITH A SQUEEZE OF STRAWBERRY JELLY TOPPING

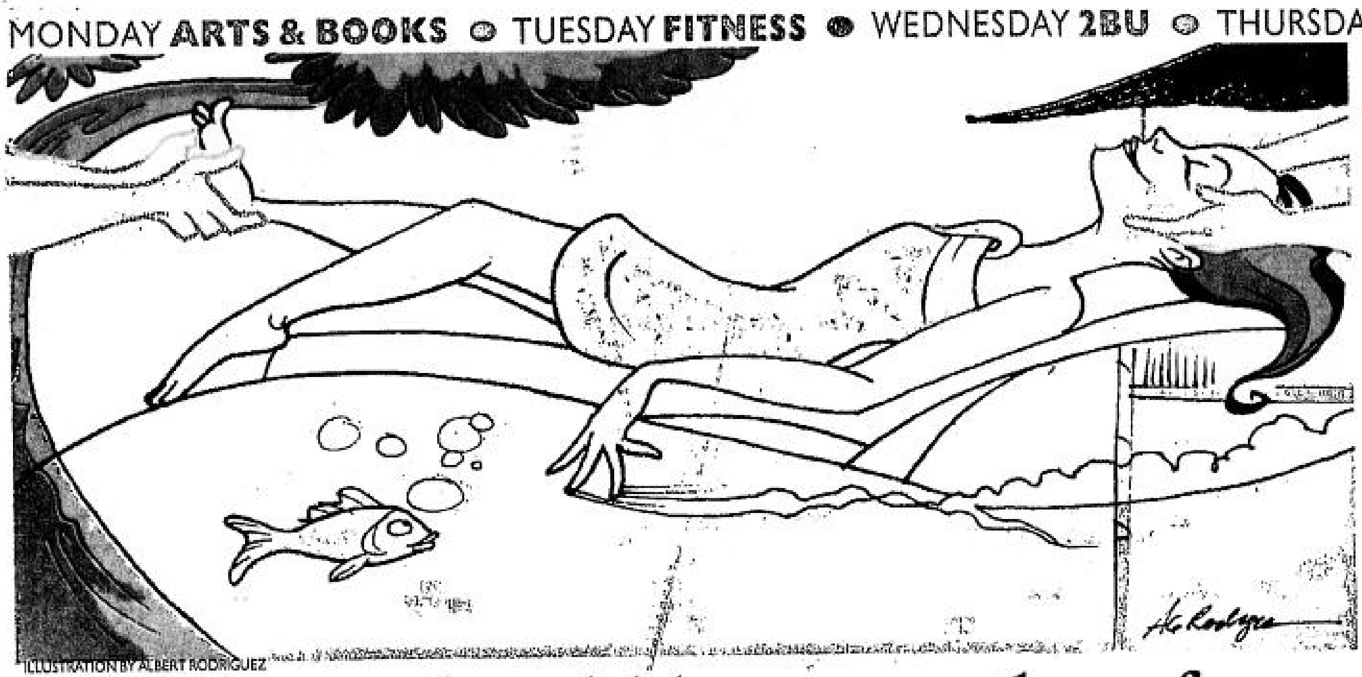

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Vacation should be more than fun

A wellness destination must offer any of 3R options—relaxation, recharge and rejuvenation

INSIDE OUT
Cory Quirino

WHEN looking for a vacation getaway this season, add relaxing and rejuvenating to fun and excitement to your list of requirements.

Studies have shown that vacations aren't always what they are cracked up to be. Getting away from home can also be quite stressful. As somebody said, "I need a vacation from my vacation."

You need not travel far from home to feel you are away, if you are inventive.

In terms of wellness, several elements must be present to get that feeling of well-being. A wellness destination must offer any of 3R options—relaxation, recharge and rejuvenation.

Relax

To relax is almost instinctive to many but a chore to some. So, when planning your next vacation, let relaxation experts do it for you.

Slow your pace for a day or two. It will not only benefit your city-fatigued brain, but also put you in a state of calm. If all you've got is a short visit, consider checking into a hotel.

The highly-stressed can try the synergy of four, a four-massage service for the price of three. Choose a four-hour special to soothe frayed nerves. Don't worry, there's no overdoing the pampering with the highly specialized treatments.

Gentleman's escape

A sip of flavonoid-infused herbal tea; remedial therapeutic massage for facial and deep-skin cleaning and smoothening; remedial therapeutic massage designed for immediate relaxation; and the Thai Treasures.

The Treasures begin with the royal Thai foot spa. Every rough and tender spot is coaxed away using rich creams that polish the feet and make them look and feel good. The feet have thousands of nerves, which with the right pressure will give almost instant results.

The Thai Herbal Body Polish uses exfoliating oils to slough off dead skin. Thai facial brings out your glow. It includes infused herbal tea, "Purity Charms"; Thermal mud wrap; Thalgo Aromatic Facial; Egyptian Foot Reflexology; infused herbal, "Sea Discovery." Slimming results from marine algae wrap. Other services that will be relaxing are aquarelle facial and royal foot spa.

The Spa Getaway Pleasure Package is for city folks who don't or can't leave the city. This includes a deluxe room, welcome drink, buffet breakfast, one yoga session and a choice of one special massage. Call the Mandarin Oriental Hotel's The Oriental Spa, 7508888.

Note that the only yoga studio in a hotel was introduced by the Mandarin Oriental and was led by yoga instructor Prakash who hails from Rishikech, India, birth place of yoga.

Yoga may be useful for just about every health condition.

For hypertension - balance of body and mind

For weight loss - a regimen to slim down

For beginners and the latest for children aged 6-15 - to teach flexibility

Vegetarians can feast on a buffet offered at the Captain's Bar of The Mandarin Oriental Hotel.

Recharge

Water has the power to energize the body. It has the amazing ability to soothe the nerves and to put the body in a state of calm. Just a few minutes of water submersion can promote a feeling of well-being.

At the Mogambo Springs of Cebu's Plantation Bay, The Double Treat Happiness via unique foot massage includes a three-hour massage. You are treated to a therapeutic aquatic experience where the latest techniques in body therapy is offered. This is followed by a body scrub using the gentlest herbal concoctions and an aromatherapy oil massage to nourish your thirsty skin.

The Ultimate Spa Experience is a four-hour pampering service like no other. Water is used to induce tranquility. You are lavished with a pool massage in warm sea water, a thorough body scrub, foot therapy, facial treatment and aromatherapy oil massage.

All this in a private open-air suite surrounded by greenery and summer breezes and the sound bird calls. Being in a resort hotel surrounded by water, you get to enjoy the spa experience in the privacy and coziness of your hotel suite. Stay at a Riverboat Suite, a two-bedroom cottage on stilts beautifully shaded by acacia trees or the Water's Edge suite, a much-sought after room situated in a lagoon with a view of the nearby beach. Call Plantation Bay Resort and Spa at (6332)3405900 local 1068 or visit www.plantationbay.com.

Rejuvenate

If healing is a matter of faith, beauty a matter of attitude, then youth is a matter of feeling. Beauty, by its very essence, is rooted in spirituality. A new way of looking at this new ancient concept is "earth-based spirituality." There is a wise woman within every woman, whose power and energy can be sourced from Creation.

Mother Earth, in all her glory—trees, flowers, wind, water, sun—can empower everyone via communion with nature. "The Great Mother Goddess who gives birth to all Creations out of the holy darkness of her womb became a metaphor for nature herself, the cosmic giver and taker of life, ever able to renew herself within the eternal cycle of life, death, and rebirth."

Rejuvenation list

A spoonful of honey can revive, recharge and rejuvenate you in minutes. If you have any leftover, mix with two teaspoons of milk (preferably fresh) for a facial mask. Leave on for five minutes followed by a warm rinse and a cool splash of water to soften the skin.

Love and light!

The Feminine Side of God, A Woman Empowerment Workshop, will be held May 20-22, in Mt. Banahaw, Dolores, Quezon.

Meeting place is Magallanes, in front of Starbucks at 6 a.m., May 20.

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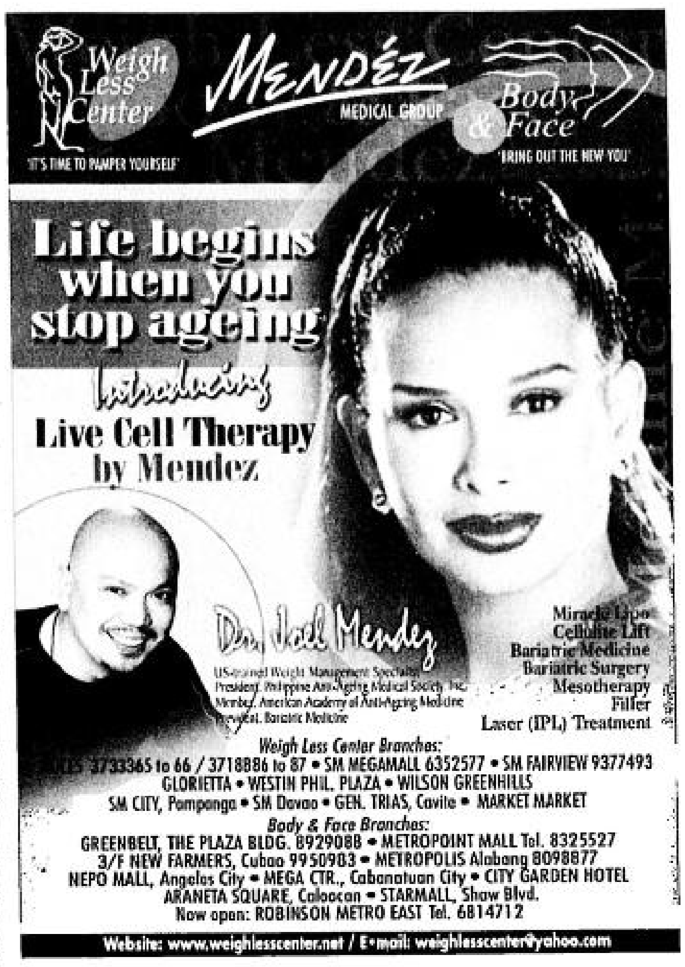

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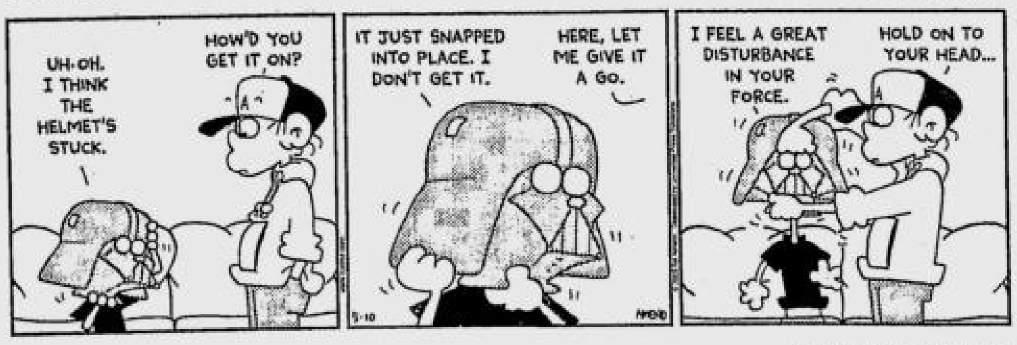
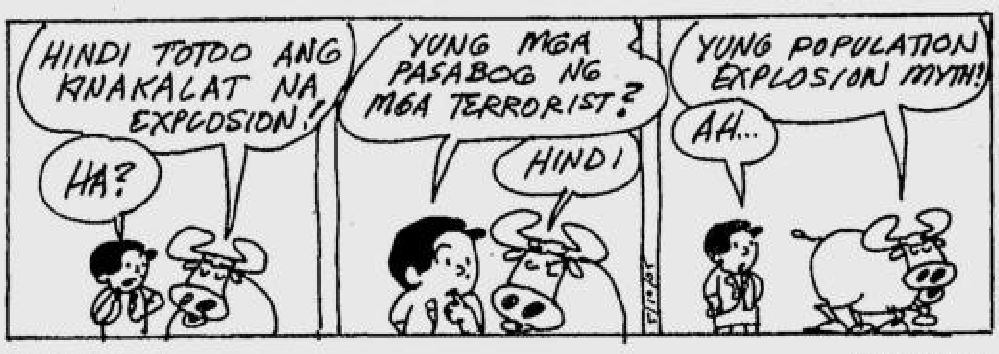
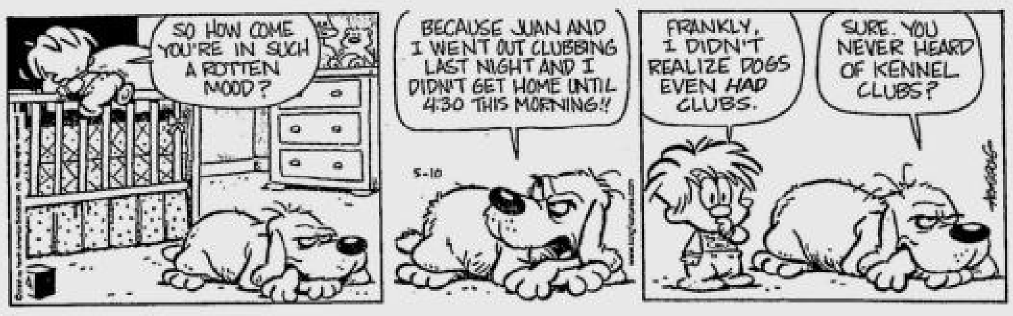
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


UH-OH. I THINK THE HELMET'S STUCK.
HOW'D YOU GET IT ON?
IT JUST SNAPPED INTO PLACE. I DON'T GET IT.
HERE, LET ME GIVE IT A GO.
I FEEL A GREAT DISTURBANCE IN YOUR FORCE.
HOLD ON TO YOUR HEAD...
5-10

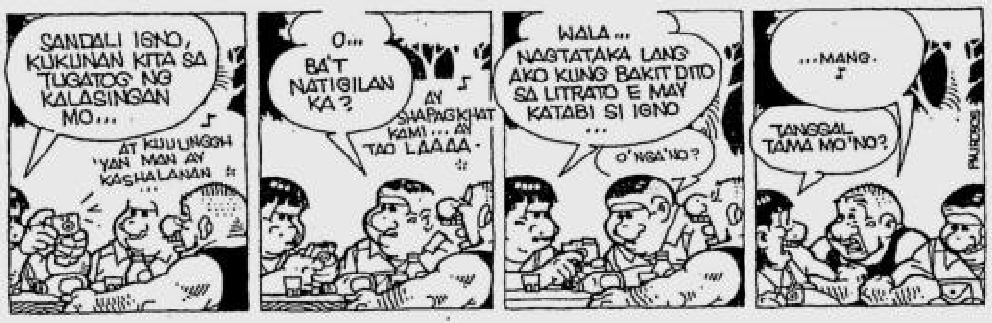
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


HINDI TOTOO ANG KINAKALAT NA EXPLOSION!
HA?
YUNG MGA PASABOG NG MGA TERRORIST?
HINDI
YUNG POPULATION EXPLOSION MYTH!
AH...

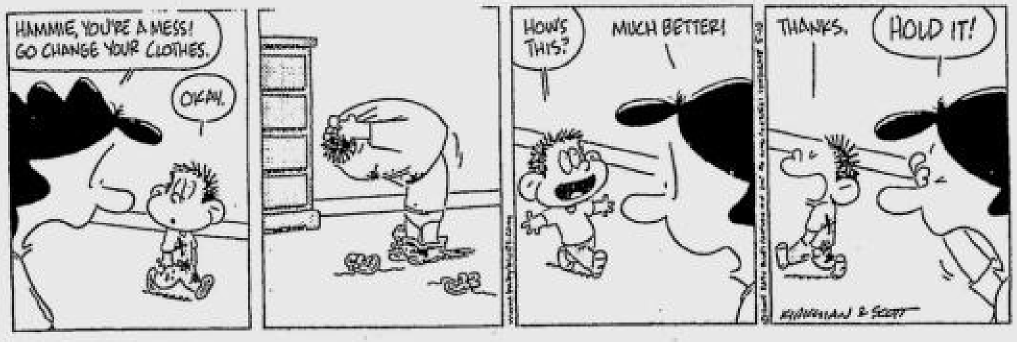
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


SO HOW COME YOU'RE IN SUCH A ROTTEN MOOD?
BECAUSE JUAN AND I WENT OUT CLUBBING LAST NIGHT AND I DIDN'T GET HOME UNTIL 4:30 THIS MORNING!!
5-10
FRANKLY, I DIDN'T REALIZE DOGS EVEN HAD CLUBS.
SURE. YOU NEVER HEARD OF KENNEL CLUBS?

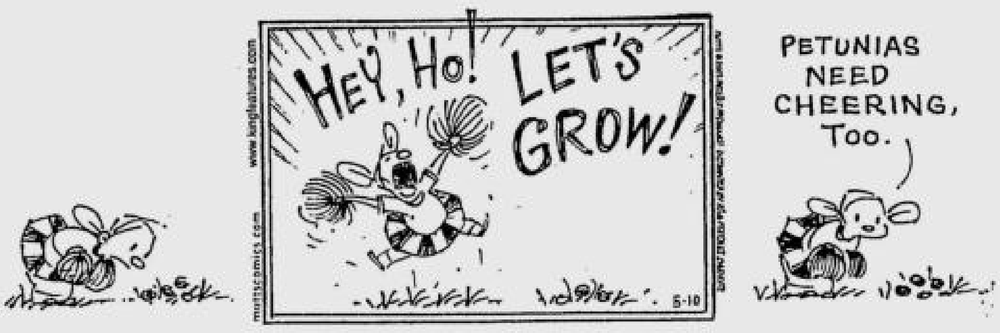
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


SANDALI IGNO, KUKUNAN KITA SA TUGATOG NG KALASINGAN MO...
AT KUULINGGH 'YAN MAN AY KASHALANAN ...
O... BA'T NATIGILAN KA?
AY SHAPAGKHAT KAMI ... AY TAO LAAAA -
WALA... NAGTATAKA LANG AKO KUNG BAKIT DITO SA LITRATO E MAY KATABI SI IGNO ...
O'NGA'NO?
...MANG.
TANGGAL TAMA MO'NO?

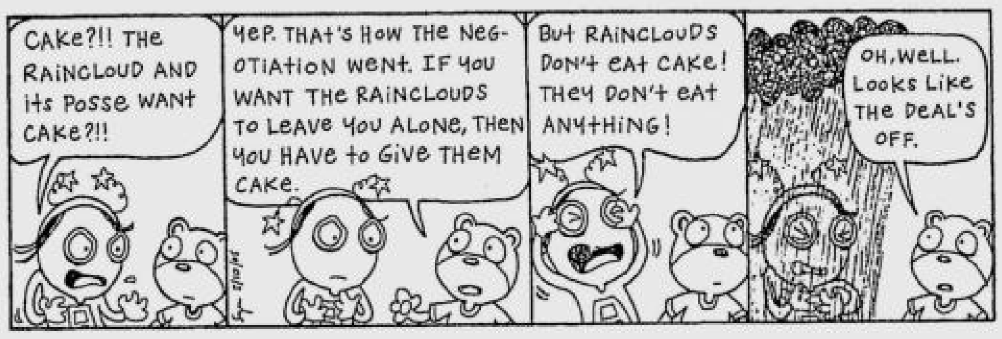
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


HAMMIE, YOU'RE A MESS! GO CHANGE YOUR CLOTHES.
OKAY.
HOW'S THIS?
MUCH BETTER!
THANKS.
HOLD IT!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

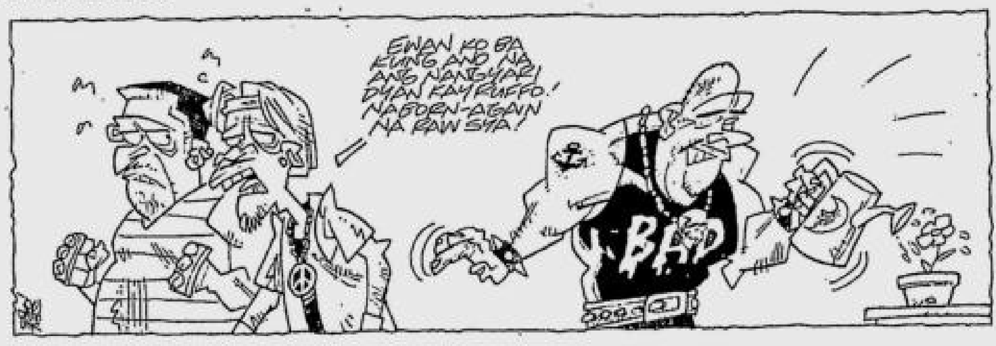
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HEY, HO! LET'S GROW!
5-10
PETUNIAS NEED CHEERING, TOO.

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


CAKE?!! THE RAINCLOUD AND its POSSE WANT CAKE?!!
YEP. THAT'S HOW THE NEGOTIATION WENT. IF YOU WANT THE RAINCLOUDS TO LEAVE YOU ALONE, THEN YOU HAVE to GIVE THEM CAKE.
But RAINCLOUDS DON'T eat CAKE! THEY DON'T eat ANYTHING!
OH, WELL. Looks Like THE DEAL'S OFF.

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


EWAN KO BA KUNG ANO NA ANG NANGYARI DYAN KAY RUFFO! NABORN-AGAIN NA RAW SIYA!
BAD

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are active and daring! You're intuitive. You need to move. Your impulse is to teach and to show others what you know. Most of you are particularly gifted. You always pursue the truth. You have physical grace, style and charm. Work hard to build something this year so that next year you'll have your rewards.
Birthdate of: Fred Astaire, dancer/actor; Judith Jamison, dancer; Paul "Bono" Hewson, musician.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a busy day for you! It's a good day for shopping, wheeling and dealing, and negotiations with others.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You're thinking about money today. This is a good day to shop. It's also a good day to come up with profitable moneymaking ideas.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): The Moon is in your sign today. Although this makes you a bit more emotional, it is also a tiny bit lucky. It gives you a little edge over everyone else.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You need more solitude today. You want to have a warm feeling in your tummy about life. Give yourself some privacy in order to pamper yourself.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Discussions with friends, especially females, will be lively and interesting today. You want the latest gossip about everything! ("He did what?!")

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Because today's Moon is at the top of your chart, you can't help but call attention to yourself. You might not like the reason—nevertheless, people will notice you today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Do something different from your everyday routine. Part of you wants a bit of adventure today. You want something different to happen! (At least go to different stores, bookshops or unusual places.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): This is a good day to have discussions about how to share something with someone. Make sure you defend your own best interests, while also being fair with others.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Today's Moon is opposite your sign. This totally focuses your attention on others, especially partners and close friends. You might also feel quite attracted to someone. (Hmmm, interesting.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Work hard at getting better organized today. Try to reduce the clutter in your life. You don't like waste, and this means you are inclined to keep a lot of stuff. Do you really need all that?

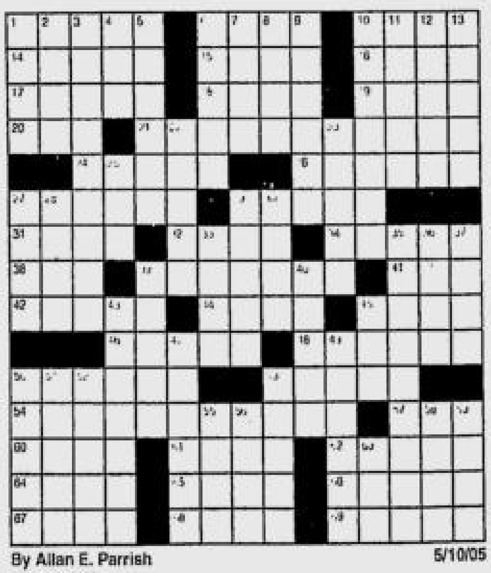
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Playful activities with children will delight you now. It's an excellent day to work in the arts or do anything creative. It's also an excellent day for some fun flirtation!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Discussions with a parent might be significant today. However, don't be a martyr. You can't help anyone else if you don't help yourself first.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Musky cat
6 Actor Guinness
10 Gaucho's device
14 Bring together
15 Pop
16 SS Alex Rodriguez
17 Methuselah's father
18 Skillet material
19 Film spool
20 PC connection
21 Former heavyweight champion
24 Muslim holy men
26 Blackboard accessory
27 Split fruit
29 Of the Arctic
31 Dresden's river
32 Broad smile
34 Aesop specialty
38 Fuss
39 Flower display
41 __ Ridge Boys
42 Wooden peg
44 Occupied
45 For two, in music
46 Steady throb
48 Broder and Brenner
50 Capital of Turkey
53 Set sights
54 "Smile" co-star
57 Licensing grp.
60 Ringlet
61 Emerald Isle
62 Actress Shire
64 Family plan
65 Baronet's wife
66 "The Seven Year Itch" star
67 Electrical unit
68 Fifths of five
69 Philippines island

DOWN
1 Signaled
2 Travelers' stops
3 Necessity for Isaac Stern
4 & so on
5 Capital of 55D
6 Corrosive substances
7 Manor's owner
8 "The Time Machine" race
9 Call off
10 "Major __"
11 Black-and-white treats
12 "My Fair Lady" composer
13 Felix or Luther
22 Mature insect
23 Velveeta maker
25 Astronaut Jemison
27 Abacus unit
28 Ray of "Battle Cry"
29 Ruffled pride
30 Burden
33 Chafes
35 Rock 'n' roll pioneer
36 Praise highly
37 __ out a living
39 Dust-jacket info
40 Vocalist Gorme
43 Shoulder ornament
45 Blvd. crosser
47 City on the Rio Grande
49 Imported beer brand
50 Natl. network
51 Toxin starter
52 Playwright Capek
53 Choreographer DeMille
55 Islamic republic
56 Thin coin
58 Former Browns QB Plum
59 Low-lying location
63 Wonder



By Allan E. Parrish
Mentor, OH

5/10/05

Monday's Puzzle Solved

G	R	A	S	P	■	L	E	N	O	■	B	R	A	T
R	O	U	T	E	■	A	R	A	D	■	B	O	D	E
A	L	B	U	M	■	H	I	D	E	■	C	A	D	S
F	L	E	A	M	A	R	K	E	T	S	■	S	E	T
■	■	■	R	I	B	■	A	R	T	I	S	T	R	Y
S	L	O	T	C	A	R	■	S	A	R	I	■	■	■
A	I	M	■	A	C	I	D	■	■	■	G	A	U	S
B	E	E	I	N	O	N	E	S	B	O	N	N	E	T
E	D	N	A	■	■	■	B	U	R	N	■	Y	E	A
■	■	■	G	A	Y	E	■	R	E	R	E	A	D	Y
K	E	R	O	S	E	N	E	■	S	U	R	■	■	■
N	T	H	■	H	O	R	N	E	T	S	N	E	S	T
A	H	O	Y	■	M	A	S	K	■	H	E	L	L	O
C	A	N	E	■	A	G	U	E	■	E	S	S	A	Y
K	N	E	W	■	N	E	E	D	■	S	T	A	G	S

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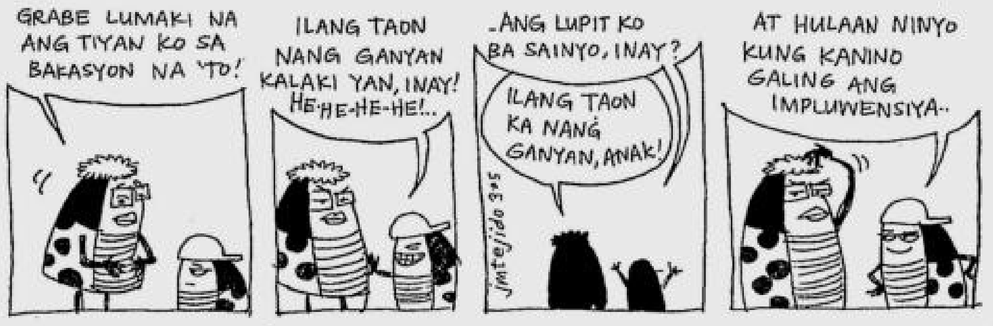
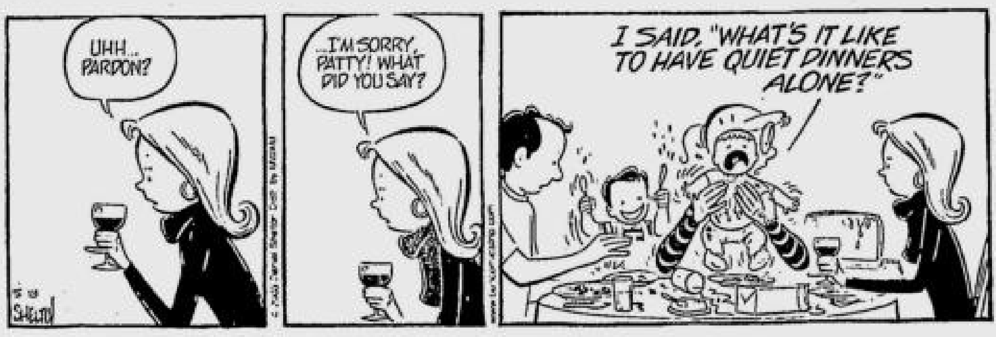
5/10/05

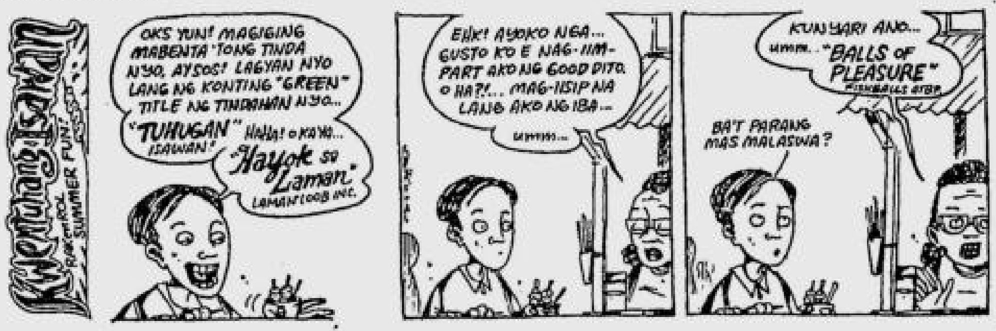
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


GRABE LUMAKI NA ANG TIYAN KO SA BAKASYON NA 'TO!
ILANG TAON NANG GANYAN KALAKI YAN, INAY! HE-HE-HE-HE!..
-ANG LUPIT KO BA SAINYO, INAY?
ILANG TAON KA NANG GANYAN, ANAK!
jmtejido 3'05
AT HULAAN NINYO KUNG KANINO GALING ANG IMPLUWENSIYA..

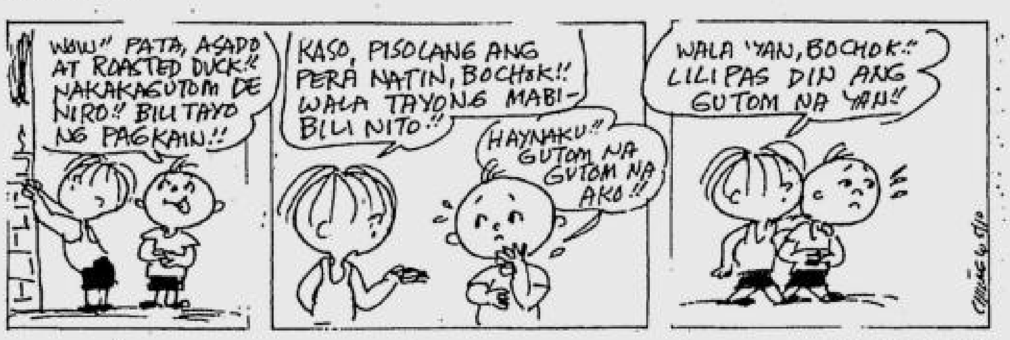
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


UHH... PARDON?
SHELTON
...I'M SORRY, PATTY! WHAT DID YOU SAY?
I SAID, "WHAT'S IT LIKE TO HAVE QUIET DINNERS ALONE?"

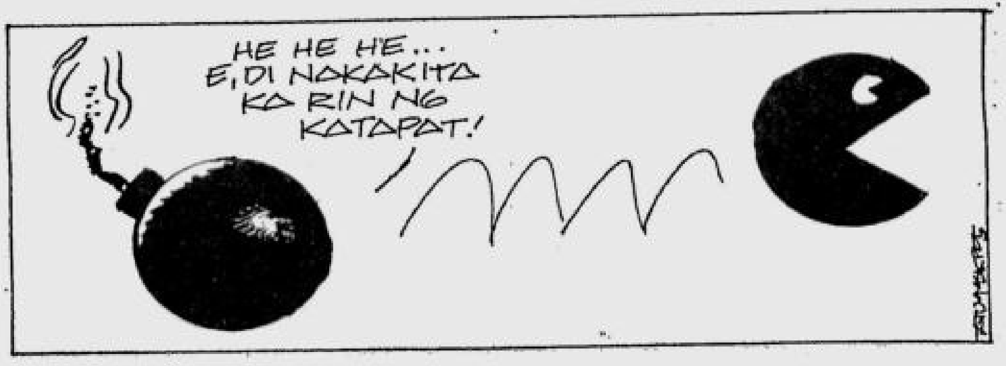
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


Kwentong Isawan
RAKENROL SUMMER FUN!
OKS YUN! MAGIGING MABENTA 'TONG TINDA NYO, AYSOS! LAGYAN NYO LANG NG KONTING "GREEN" TITLE NG TINDAHAN NYO...
"TUHUGAN" ISAWAN
HAHA! O KAYA...
"Hayok sa Laman" LAMAN-LOOB INC.
EHK! AYOKO NGA... GUSTO KO E NAG-IIM-PART AKO NG GOOD DITO. O HA?!... MAG-IISIP NA LANG AKO NG IBA...
umm...
KUNYARI ANO... umm... "BALLS OF PLEASURE" FISHBALLS ATBP.
BA'T PARANG MAS MALASWA?

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

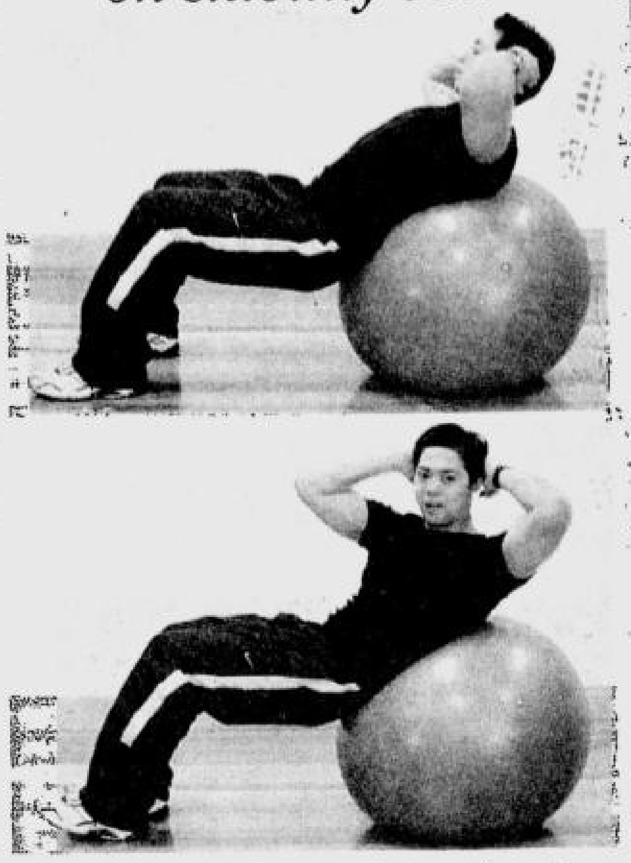

WOW!! PATA, ASADO AT ROASTED DUCK!! NAKAKAGUTOM DE NIRO!! BILI TAYO NG PAGKAIN!!
KASO, PISO LANG ANG PERA NATIN, BOCHOK!! WALA TAYONG MABIBILI NITO!!
HAYNAKU!! GUTOM NA GUTOM NA AKO!!
WALA 'YAN, BOCHOK!! LILIPAS DIN ANG GUTOM NA 'YAN!!

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


HE HE HE... E, DI NAKAKITA KA RIN NG KATAPAT!

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Incline oblique crunch on stability ball



STRENGTHENS the abdominal muscles, particularly the oblique muscles that criss-cross the waist.

Equipment:
Stability ball

Exercise technique:

1. Start by sitting on the ball with your legs hip width apart.
2. Slowly lower yourself into an inclined position by walking your feet forward while you simultaneously lean backwards.
3. Once the ball is behind your lower back, place your hands behind your head. This is the starting position.
4. Diagonally curl your upper body bringing the bottom of your ribcage towards the opposite hipbone.
5. Return to the starting position.
6. Do the desired number of repetitions on one side, then do the other.

Performance tips:

1. Exhale as you diagonally curl across; inhale as you uncurl.
2. Place your fingers lightly at the sides of your head instead of clasping your hands to avoid pulling on your neck.
3. Avoid bringing your elbow across your face. Focus on rotating at the waist.
4. An easier variation is to do the alternating oblique curl.

Repetitions:
12 to 15 repetitions.

Why losing weight is harder for women

WELL AND GOOD
Tina Juan

AN old weight-loss cartoon graphically showed how men and women lost weight.

In the cartoon, the man ate one steak instead of his usual two, drank two beers instead of five, played a couple of rounds of tennis, and lost eight pounds.

The woman did aerobic classes for a month until she dropped from exhaustion, ate next to nothing, and only lost half a pound.

The cartoon was an exaggeration but it did point out the truth that women had a harder time losing weight.

Fat cells

A fat cell stores fat when your body doesn't need it and releases it when your body needs the extra energy. Different enzymes control these reactions.

An enzyme is a protein that hastens or slows a chemical reaction. Enzymes that help store fat are called lipogenic (lipo=fat, genesis=formation) while lipolytic ("lysis"=breakdown) enzymes help release it from the cell.

Scientists have found that women tend to have more fat-storing lipogenic enzymes and larger fat cells while men have more fat-releasing lipolytic enzymes and smaller fat cells.

In other words, women store fat quickly and lose it slowly while men store fat slowly and lose it quickly. While there are exceptions, the observation is generally true.

Muscle mass

The average woman has smaller muscles than the average man. Each pound of muscle burns about 10 calories per day. The more muscle mass, the more calories burned in a 24-hour period.

Men have more muscles, less fat while women have less muscle, more fat. A healthy body fat percentage for a man is 12-18 percent and 18-25 percent for a woman.

Healthy women do jiggle, according to Covert Bailey, author of the bestseller, "Fit or Fat." He observes that "the buttock and thigh muscles may be quite firm, but most women, unless they are very young or have inherited thin legs and hips, carry a wiggling layer of fat in that area. Even super-athletic women—those who play professional tennis or run marathons—are not as solid in the hips and thighs as their moderately active male friends. This is simply part of being a woman."

Estrogen

What makes a woman a woman is estrogen, the female sex hormone. Estrogen, scientists have found, multiplies the fat-storing enzymes. It is no wonder that the two periods in a woman's life when estrogen floods her system, puberty and pregnancy, are the times when a woman is more likely to store fat.

Estrogen also determines a woman's shape since it directs fat to be stored in the buttocks, hips, and thighs. Throughout history, the sign of fertility has been large hips in a woman.

Testosterone, the male hormone, meanwhile, encourages the production of the fat-releasing enzymes.

Fat and fertility

Women have the amazing ability to sustain another life in their womb for nine months and then feed that new life with milk made by their bodies. Nature has made sure that a woman has an abundant storage of fat to stay fertile, carry a pregnancy to term, and lactate even in times when food is scarce.

Long ago, stored fat came in handy when famine was a common occurrence and women had to do hard physical labor. Just 200 years ago, the average woman had to walk a few miles to get clean water.

Today, this propensity to store fat is no longer such a blessing since we have so many laborsaving devices and an abundant supply of food.

Counterproductive

The built-in protective mechanism that ensured survival during a famine now works against a woman when she tries to starve herself in a misguided attempt to lose weight.

The body cannot tell the difference between famine and a self-imposed "crash diet." When you go on a starvation diet, biochemical changes are set into motion.

One of the first changes is the activation and multiplication of fat-storing enzymes. Worse, fat cells become less able to shed fat. Some studies have shown that severe dieting can reduce fat-releasing enzymes by 50 percent.

Most of the weight lost on a crash diet comes from the lean parts of the body—water and muscles. The haggard faces and soft, flabby bodies of women who lost large amounts of weight on crash diets are the result of this loss of lean body mass.

And since there is less lean body tissue, the body now burns fewer calories. The weight is regained in the form of more fat. Even though the body eventually recovers the lost lean tissue, the damage (increase in fat) has been done.

Outsmart fat cell

So, if dieting doesn't work, what does? According to Debra Waterhouse, nutrition counselor and author of "Outsmarting the Female Fat Cell," exercise is the only strategy that effectively releases fat from the fat cells. All other strategies, while effective, like eating less fatty/starchy foods and controlling your portions, simply prevent fat storage.

The key is to become an efficient fat burner. This is a slow process. The physiological changes that occur inside the body in response to exercise do not happen overnight. Remember, if it were that easy for women to lose fat, the human race would have died out a long time ago.

Visit www.tinajuanfitness.info.

Miriam offers capoeira

Capoeira , a marriage of dance and martial arts, is among several modules offered by Miriam College in its summer program this year.

Capoeira traces its history to the Bantu people of Angola, who were brought to Brazil by the Portuguese brought to work in sugarcane and cotton plantations in the 1500s.

Capoeira's technical repertoire evolved in fights within African villages in Brazil.

In 1974 Brazil named *capoeira* its national sport and created the National Federation of Capoeira to govern and coordinate the promotion of the art worldwide.

Aside from *capoeira*, Miriam College is also offering, among others, tae kwon do, badminton, basketball, volleyball, swimming, driving lessons, Pee Wee work out, art lessons, theater workshop, video production, poetry therapy, peace education workshop, orientation course on foreign service officer examination, professional development, enhancement and enrichment classes, summer reinforcement classes and a lot more. Call 5805400 loc. 1099 or 205.

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FIRST PHILIPPINE ISSUE!
Men'sHealth
LOSE YOUR GUT!
HOT SEX! DRIVE HER WILD TONIGHT!
ADD 2 INCHES TO YOUR BICEPS
THE BEST VITAMINS FOR MEN, P.80
Foods That Fight Fat
25 QUICK FIXES FOR STRESSED-OUT GUYS
LOOK GREAT INSTANTLY!

Magazine for men launched

SUMMIT Media has launched Men's Health, the world's largest and most influential men's lifestyle magazine.

Men's Health Philippines is a monthly lifestyle magazine that focuses on men and how they can make their lives better.

For its first issue this May, Men's Health reports on how to lose your gut with a complete belly-off program. Men can also find out how to add two inches to their biceps, the best vitamins for them, foods that fight fat and 25 quick fixes for stress.

As part of its grand launch, Men's Health will have its initial promo, the Men's Health Best Body Challenge: Change Your Life and Win P150,000! It will be a search for the man and woman who epitomize the ideals of Men's Health.

The competition takes into consideration lifestyle, fitness and intent to improve one's life.

Men's Health May issue is now available in magazine stands and bookstores at P120 per copy.

Conference for women in need of healing

THE INNER Beauty Conference, a session on healing for today's woman, will be held May 21 at the Elim Center for Renewal,

No. 51 10th St., Rolling Hills Village, New Manila, Quezon City; and May 28 at the SM Trade Hall, Cebu City.

The Inner Beauty Conference promises a day that will turn even a woman's biggest mess into a thing of beauty. It will show how God's healing grace can mend a broken heart and help women put the pieces of their lives back again.

The day will feature helpful and insightful talks. Workshops on how to prepare healthy meals and how to unwind after a long day, as well as book sales, and bazaar are among the added features.

Tickets to the conference cost P300 each.

Call Springs Foundation, Inc. in Manila (7226749) and Cebu (2344192) or www.innerbeautysecrets.com and www.elimglobal.org.

Clinic marks anniversary with freebies, discounts

THE BOROUGH Medical Care Institute in Quezon City marks its first anniversary this May with free consultations and screenings, surgeries, discounts, giveaways and lectures.

For the whole month, it offers free cataract surgery for 100 indigent patients in cooperation with Mercy Hospice Foundation, Inc. Call 6871345, 6871369 or 6871779 for screening appointments, on a first come, first served basis.

On May 14, 9 a.m.-12 noon, the first 100 senior citizens (60 years old and above) can get free fasting blood sugar (FBS) and cholesterol screening with free electrocardiogram (ECG) screening for those with high cholesterol levels.

A fixed P250 consultation fee and discounts on other clinic services are also offered.

On the same day, 1-5 p.m., babies and young adults, 18 years old and below, can avail of the children's wellness package.

On May 21, 9 a.m.-12 noon, men's health will be on focus with free erectile dysfunction (ED) screening, a lecture on ED, free consultation with a urologist and discounts on clinical services.

The afternoon of the same day, 1-5 p.m., is for women's wellness with free screening for osteoporosis and free skin analysis. A fee of P250 will be charged for consultation fee with ob-gynecologists, lecture on prenatal care and discounts on clinical services.

Borough Medical Care's first anniversary celebration is in cooperation with Pfizer, Imedeen, Mead Johnson, New Zealand Milk and the Mercy Hospice Foundation, Inc. It is on the 6/F of the Cybermall Building in Eastwood City, E. Rodriguez Ave., Libis, QC.

MEDICard, The Healthcare I Deserve!

Take Charge Doc!

What is the mechanism by which AIDS lowers the body's immune system? (Part 1 of 2)

Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) is the last stage of a human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection and is a term we use to describe the most severe manifestations of this disease. HIV thrives in human cells only and is transmitted to another person through contact of bodily fluids. Once a person is infected with HIV, he will have it for life.

When a person is infected by HIV, the virus enters and multiplies in the lymphatic and immune system. This causes destruction of the lymphoid tissue compounds that leads to damage to the body's defense structure. Found in this tissue compounds are various cells that play major roles in defending our body from different harmful substances and organisms that may enter it. One of the most prominent of these cells is the CD4+ T lymphocytes.

This week's answer to our feature question on AIDS was given by our accredited doctor based in De La Salle University Medical Center (DLSUMC). Dr. Loreta B. Zoleta. Dr. Zoleta finished Medicine at De La Salle University in 1990. She took her residency for her specialization in Internal Medicine at DLSUMC followed by a fellowship training program in Infectious Diseases at UP-PGH. Currently, Dr. Zoleta is the Infectious Disease Consultant, the Head of Adult Immunization Unit and Chairman of the Infection Control Committee of DLSUMC. She is also affiliated with the Philippine College of Physicians and the Philippine Society for Microbiology and Infectious Disease. MEDICard members may visit Dr. Zoleta for consultations at Room 122, every Mondays and Tuesdays, 3 to 6 pm and on Wednesdays until Fridays, 9 am to 2 pm. She also holds clinic at Room 1101 every Wednesdays from 3 to 6 in the evening.

Erratum: Inadvertently missed during the last issue was *Dr. Salvador Abad Santos'* clinic schedule at Makati Medical Center, Room 259, every Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1 to 4 PM and on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 9 AM to 12 noon.

MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

Nicky

MEDICard PHILIPPINES, INC. 9th floor Sagittarius Building H.V. dela Costa Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City 1227 Trunkline: 867-2020 Fax No.: 894-5720; 810-3856 Text: Key in MEDICARD and send to 2344 (Globe & Touch Mobile) or 4627 (Smart & Talk N Text) E-mail: inquiry@medicardphils.com Website: www.medicardphils.com

WOMEN POWER. Renna Hechanova-Angeles, with Tessie Yulo-Gomez, Ningning Cojuangco, Yvonne Yuchengco, Toni Yulo-Loyzaga, Inah Dizon and Yaying Dragon

MOI with two of Manille's 400 café specialists, Nelly Gonzales and Celine Heras, and Asia's King of Fashion Pitoy Moreno

Medical care that keeps astronauts in tiptop shape

THE DASHING, BRILLIANT DOCTORS AND THE LADY: Cosmo Manille's top representative Leo de Leon, with Enrique Bandala-Arceo, international business development manager; Dr. Joseph Varon, world-class cardiologist and critical care specialist; philanthropist Imelda Cojuangco; St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital's Dr. Warren Whitehead; and Dr. Andres Mesa

COSMO Manille's creamier of the cream gathered together for an ultra-important event.

No, not for the unveiling of the latest fashion trends or a civic occasion, but recent advances in wellness and health care.

Hotshot experts from the renowned Texas Medical Center (TMC) in Houston, the largest medical complex in the world, hosted a *tres* exclusive special lunch at the Peninsula Hotel's elegant Old Manila Resto, where we met the world's finest and, let me add, *palanggas*, most handsome physicians.

With over 42 member institutions, 13 hospitals and over 15,000 international visitors annually, the TMC is a marvel of an institution. It sits on over 2,400 acres and has 100 buildings—a city within a city, dahlings.

And, with over US$5.4 billion in combined operating budgets, US$7 billion in research grants, the best and latest in healthcare and well-known specialists are available here.

Launching

One of TMC's principal health care institutions, the St. Luke's Episcopal Health System (no relation to the local group, *palanggas*), was in Manille to launch its fab services in Asia with the Philippines as regional base. St. Luke's, a private non-profit hospital, is one of the top 10 hospitals in the United States as ranked by the US News and Word Report.

St. Luke's is also known as the exclusive health care provider of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). If you can keep the astronauts in shape, dahlings, you have to be the best.

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak** EasyShare system

Also offering excellent nursing care, it "boasts of a high percentage of Filipino nurses to ensure that our visiting patients get the benefits of home-grown hospitality and service."

Leading the pack of St. Luke's Episcopal five hotshot representatives were the dashing duo of vice president **Warren Whitehead** and international business development manager **Enrique Bandala-Arceo.** The others were international medical expert Dr. **Joseph Varon**, a leading critical care specialist and internationally renowned cardiologist; Dr. **Andres Mesa**; and their Philippine representative, Mr. Charmer himself, **Leo de Leon**, former Houston resident.

Real power group

Après meetings with Cabinet members and speaking engagements at the Makati and Manila Rotary Clubs, they hosted a special luncheon with the real powers behind the throne.

The perfumed set was led by ultra glam philanthropist, **Meldy Cojuangco**, and her eye-catching daughter **Ningning**; glamorous mother-daughter teams of **Mely Hechanova** and **Renna Angeles** and **Celine** and **Sylvia Heras**; **Nene Bartolome** and her equally fabulous *amigas*, **Sylvia Pascual**, **Inah Dizon** and **Daisy Payumo**; headturners **Yaying Dragon** and **Nelly Gonzales**; corporate hotshot **Yvonne Yuchengco**; and dynamic sisters **Toni** and **Tessie Yulo.**

The master himself, **Pitoy Moreno**, joined the sumptuous but healthy lunch at the Old Manila's private room.

The ladies learned more about vital health issues and new developments that could improve wellness and save lives.

We were all treated to an uber-informative, entertaining and impressive presentation on caring for the heart, latest medical care for cancer and other ailments. I learned a few tips for good health.

HEALTH IN THEIR GUCCI BAGS. Daisy Payumo, Sylvia Lopez and Inah Dizon

Health tips

Check this out carefully, *palanggas*:

Sugar, even the kind found in fruits, "is the building block of degenerative diseases, from diabetes to heart disease and cancer." Atkins and South Beach were onto something—taming our sweet tooth is a must, dahlings.

Next, we must get immunized against some deadly diseases. The five vaccines we need are for tetanus, hepatitis, chicken pox, flu and pneumonia shots.

Now, for our hearts, a minimum of 30 minutes exercise, three times a week. Consider taking statins to lower bad cholesterol (LDL) and increase good cholesterol (HDL) to prevent plaques from forming that may lead to strokes and heart attacks.

Well, *palanggas*, the great news is that St. Luke's has now a representative office in our town, The Houston Medical Group (HMG).

OLD-WEALTH socialite Mely Concepcion-Hechanova

ROSARIO Bartolome

SYLVIA Pascual

Patients can avail of international expertise and learn about other treatment options for conditions ranging from heart disease to cancer without having to leave the country. Teleconference calls with you, your doctor and experts in Texas can be conducted.

Patients can also make immediate appointments to avail of the world-class treatment by leading specialists at TMC.

Five-star service

The most impressive part, *palanggas*, is that the HMG has a "concierge service" for clients. In short, this health care system is so advanced, patients are treated like VIP guests in a five-star hotel.

Those who have been to St. Luke's swear that hospital suites rival those of the finest hotels in the world.

Foreign patients are met by a St. Luke's representative at the airport with a complimentary car service to the hospital.

Now, *palanggas*, if that ain't top class service, what is?

The HMG will arrange an appointment through the St. Luke's International Patient Center, which serves over 88 countries, and help you keep your famille back home informed on your condition.

And the best part is, *palanggas*, the value for money is super. Health care at St. Luke's is 30 percent more affordable than other leading hospitals in the US.

After bombarding the doctors with questions, we all thanked Warren, Enrique, Drs. Varon and Mesa, and Leo for a wonderful and a super enlightening time.

It's a must that you give the Houston Medical Group a call at 8885266.

Always remember, *palanggas*, your health is your wealth, *n'est- ce pas?*

Crime detection and the Akashic Record

"THERE is nothing hidden that will not be revealed." This passage in the Bible has for a long time intrigued me.

What could that passage mean? Does it mean there are no secrets that can be kept? Christian priests, of course, say the passage refers to the all-knowing nature of God, his omniscience.

But couldn't that passage be referring also to a universal truth that man can have access to every hidden thing, too? Shakespeare repeated the same theme when he wrote in his play, "Truth will out!"

A criminal act can go undetected and unpunished only if it can be concealed or hidden from everybody else. But is this possible? Is there such a thing as a perfect crime?

The first recorded murder in human history was committed by Cain, who killed his brother Abel out of jealousy. No one saw him do it, for there was apparently no one else except the four of them on earth—Adam, Eve and the brothers, or so the Bible tells us. Yet the blood of Abel cried out to heavens and was heard by God.

Is this simply metaphorical or literal? I think it shows that nothing at all can be hidden from others. Truth will out, no matter what.

Eastern concept

I soon discovered why this was so. To explain it, we have to introduce the Eastern concept of the "Akasha." The Akasha is difficult to explain because it has no English equivalent. The nearest translation I have come across for it is "time/space," but even this does not really explain its true meaning.

The simplest definition of Akasha I have found is: "If you reduce everything else in the universe to its ultimate component, what will be left is the Akasha."

In science, the ultimate composition or element of matter was originally thought to be the atom, which means "indivisible." When the atom was split, scientists learned there must be smaller particles composing the atom, i.e. electron, proton etc.

Beyond the atomic particles is the quantum level. What lies beyond this has no name yet because science has not discovered it so far. One well-known physicist, I think it was James Jeans, said "the ultimate stuff of the universe is mind stuff." The Akasha is even beyond the mind.

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

Akasha readers

Everything in the universe, every thought, desire, intention, action, object, etc., is recorded in what is known as the Akashic Record. There is no escaping this because once you act in any manner, whether physical or mental, it is recorded in the Akasha.

If this is so, then there is no crime that cannot be detected or discovered by one who can read the Akashic Record.

Are there such people? Yes, there are divine beings and a few gifted psychics who can read the Akashic Record. Jesus Christ is one of them. The gifted are such psychics as Edgar Cayce of the United States, Olof Jonsson of Sweden, and Gerard Croiset of the Netherlands. I'm sure there are others I have not heard about.

In the Philippines, I have come across at least four psychics who can access the Akashio Record. That's why their psychic readings are so accurate and detailed.

The Christian religion, I believe, has an idea of the Akashic Record because it teaches that when a person dies, St. Peter in heaven will open a Book of Life where everything a person has done or not done, everything he has thought of or not thought of, is recorded. From his review of what is recorded in the Book of Life, St. Peter will direct the man to heaven or hell.

Christian version

This so-called Book of Life of the Christian religion, I believe, is the Akashic Record of each person. We each create our own Akashic Record when we are born, and it ends when we die.

What is the practical use of the ability to read the Akashic Record? One can, for example, hold a murder weapon, say a knife or gun, and he/she will be able to see how the crime was committed and who held the weapon. Every time we hold an object, specially if accompanied by strong emotions, we leave an imprint of ourselves in it.

I am talking here of some non-material, intangible and permanent imprint that cannot be washed off or cleansed away because it does not belong to the physical but to the etheric world.

Internationally known psychics, such as Jonsson and Croiset, have helped police forces in their countries to solve crimes and find missing persons. Unfortunately, both have already passed away. But someday, somebody else will take their place and continue the work they left behind.

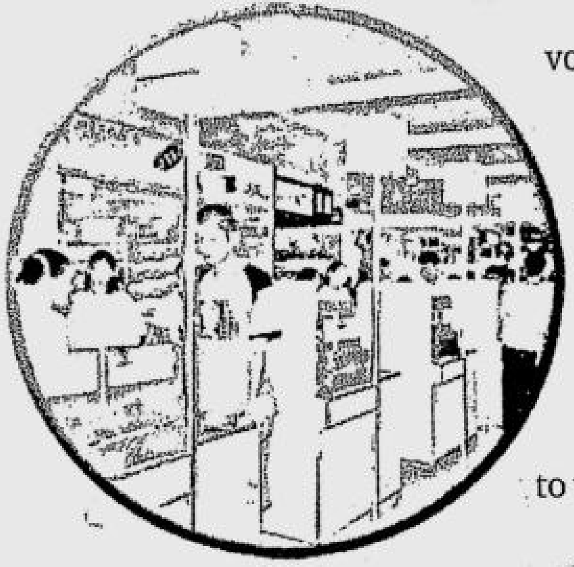
In the Philippines, law enforcement agencies do not have an idea what they are missing. Neither are they interested in finding out more about their untapped mental resources that can be used in crime fighting. This may change in the near future as science begins to know more about the workings of the awakened or enlightened mind.

Address letters to this column to Prince Plaza I, 106 Legazpi St., Legazpi Village, Makati City. Call 8107245 or 8926806 for information on seminars I conduct. E-mail jlicauco@edsamail.com.ph or visit http://www.jlicauco.shorturl.com. Listen to my dzMM radio program, 7-8 p.m., every Sunday.

THE LANDMARK

Bigger. Spacious. More Products.
Better. Well stocked.
Brighter. Organized. Easier to Navigate.

A new Landmark Supermarket guarantees shopping to be one wonderful experience and hassle-free



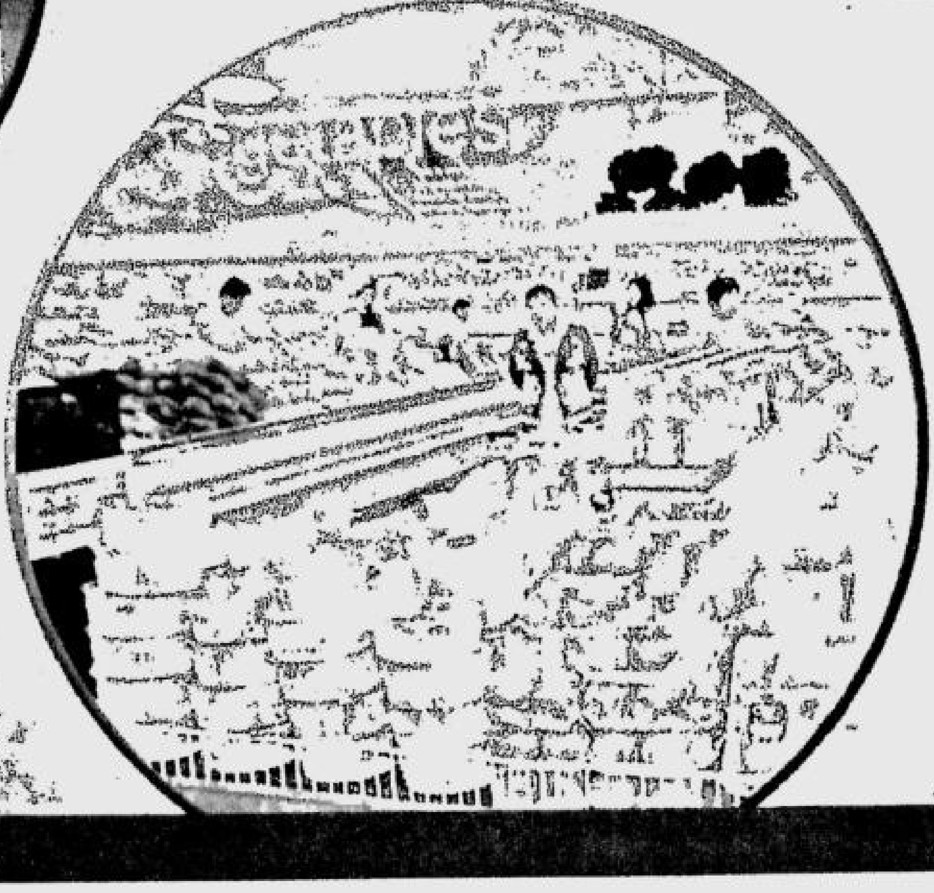
Landmark did some makeover of its famous Supermarket Division located at the basement and voila!-- the latest additions and innovative segregation of products make it all more worthwhile to visit the store.

IT'S a good day for shopping. The sun's up and the skies are friendly. So grab those shades, wear some sunblock and head to the new Landmark Supermarket, where shopping is guaranteed to be one wonderful experience.

Landmark did some makeover of its famous Supermarket Division located at the basement and voila! -- the latest additions and innovative segregation of products make it all more worthwhile to visit the store.

Check out the more spacious and well-stocked Fresh Produce section. The varieties of vegetables and fruits are astounding in scope. There are yellow and red big bellpeppers, packed, clean and ready-to-eat vegetable salad from Dizon farms, Dole's sweet large onions, large smooth Korean radish, fresh tamarind fruit, short and long togue, different types of tofus, lettuce, durian and marang, fresh saluyot leaves and kamote tops, different rice types that includes organic brown rice.

BIGGER/ D2



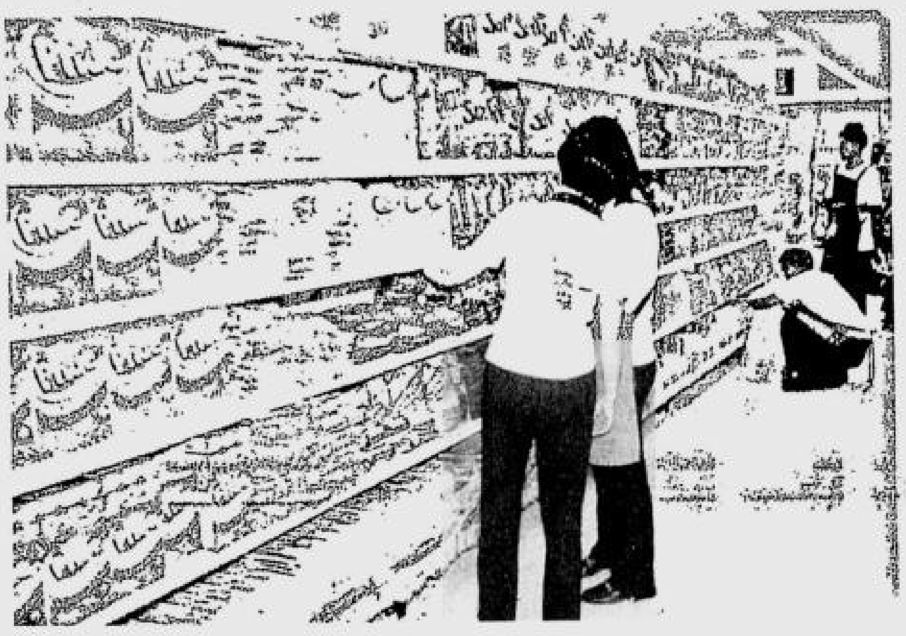
From page D1

The allotting of more space for fresh produce section is intended to answer the need for foods and products for healthy lifestyle, which happens to be the popular, trendy and widely held notion of living today.

Connie Vinuya, store manager, said more people are buying more fresh produce and has something to do with people being health conscious.

Landmark's fresh produce come from the fruits and vegetable producing towns of Benguet, Nueva Ecija, Cebu and Mindanao. Vinuya added that at Landmark's Supermarket, you can find many varieties of Philippine local fruits.

> The allotting of more space for fresh produce section is intended to answer the need for foods and products for healthy lifestyle, which happens to be the popular, trendy and widely held notion of living today.



THE LANDMARK

Bigger. Spacious. More Products.
Better. Well stocked.
Brighter. Organized. Easier to Navigate.

Perwoll
Liquid Laundry Detergent
Clothes looks new all the time

Henkel
A Brand Like a Friend

Vernel
Fabric Softener
"Soothe your senses"

Happy 17th Anniversary
THE LANDMARK
SUPERMARKET

Lady's Choice

Best Foods

Lipton

Knorr

Congratulations!
THE LANDMARK
Supermarket

From : Unilever Foods (CMC)

Sanicare
Sanicare
Sanicare
Sanicare
Sanicare
Sanicare

Sanicare

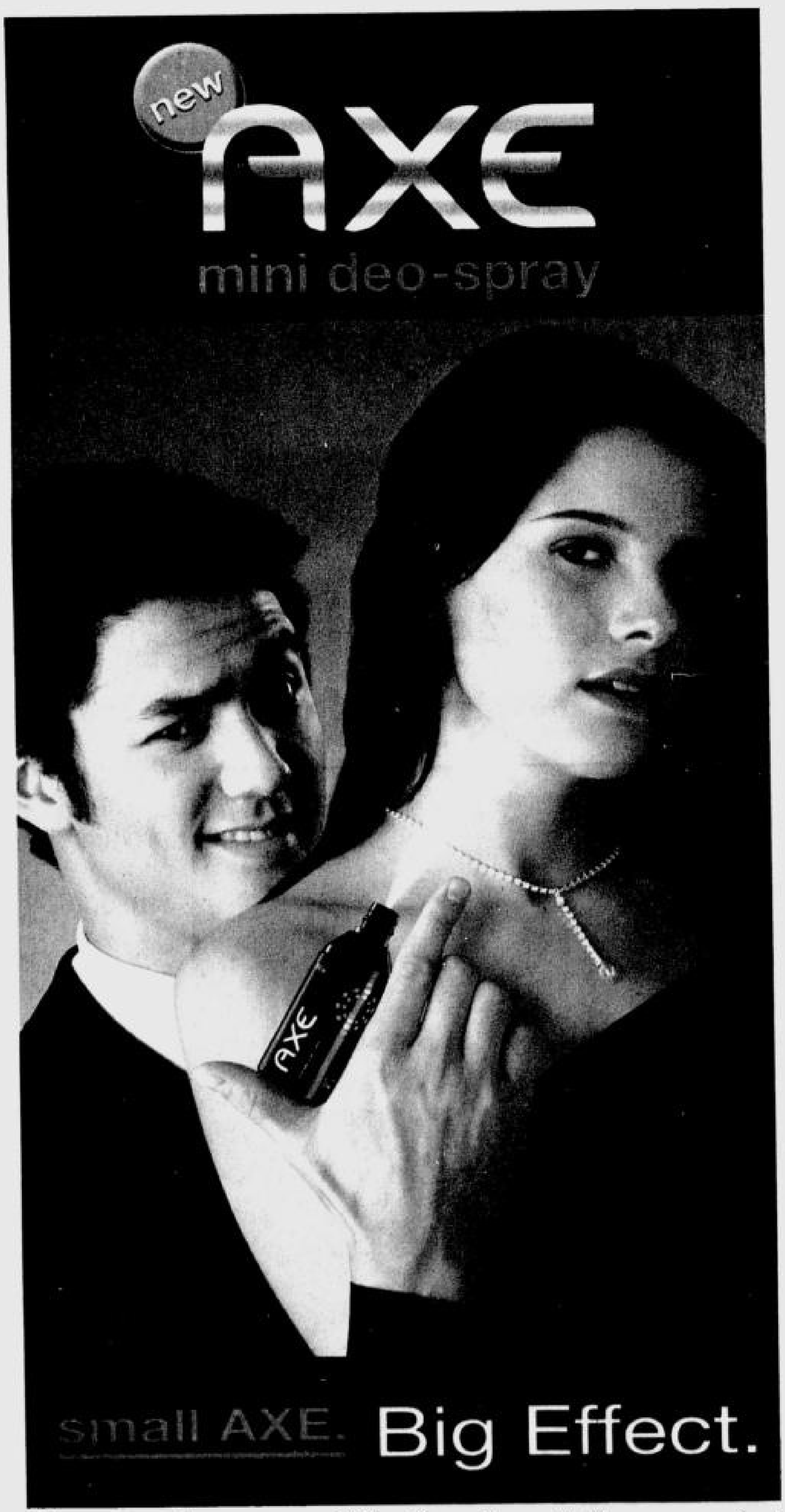
Truly hygienic line of tissue paper made from 100 % virgin pulp. No artificial whiteners and Chlorine-free bleaching is utilized.

The line consists of Premium quality 2-ply Bathroom Tissues, 3-ply and 2-ply Facial Tissues, 2-ply Kitchen Roll Towels, extra thick yet soft 1-ply Interfolded Paper Towels and 2-ply Facial Serviettes.

SCPA
SANITARY CARE PRODUCTS ASIA

Limited
Summer Edition
NEW
SUNSILK
Summer fresh
For Summer fresh
Summer beautiful hair!

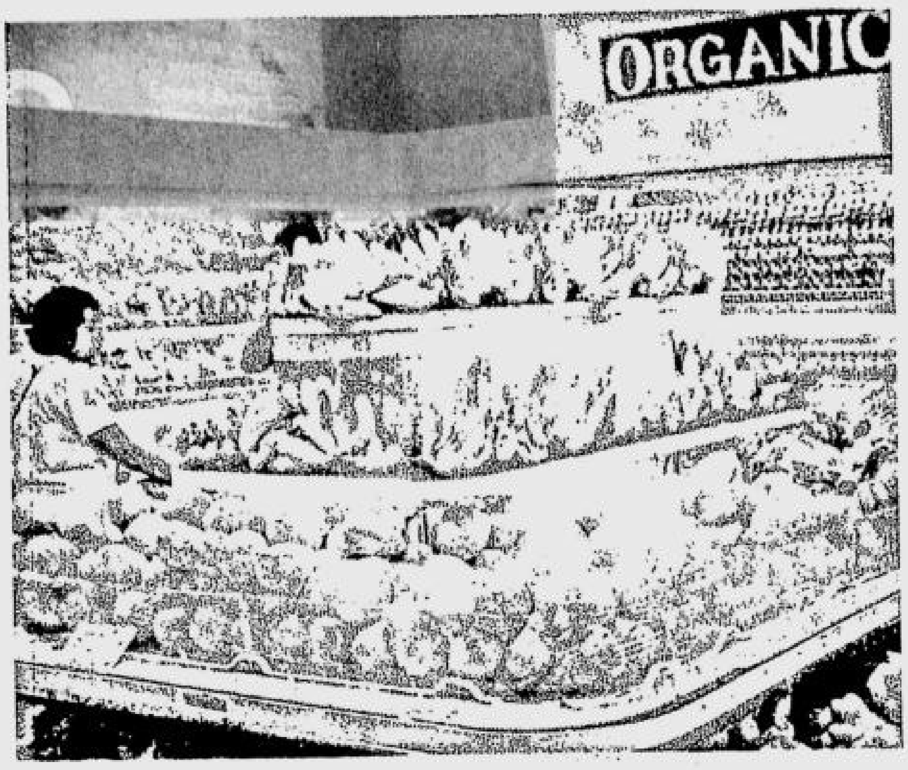
Congratulations to The Landmark Supermarket on its 17th year Anniversary!
- from SUNSILK


new
AXE
mini deo-spray
small AXE. Big Effect.

Congratulations to The Landmark Supermarket on its 17th year Anniversary from AXE

GET COMPLETE MOUTH FITNESS
closeup
WITH VITAMIN FLUORIDE SYSTEM
For whiter teeth , fresher breath, stronger teeth and gums

Congratulations to The Landmark Supermarket on its 17th year Anniversary from Closeup



Check out very well stocked sections of fresh produce, meats and fish

THE FISH section is one corner to behold. It's like entering a fish market with all the assortment of fishes from big to small. There's maya maya at 250 a kilo, salmon head at 285 a kilo, lapu-lapu, tursilyo, tilapia, asuhos, espada, tawilis, tambols, betilya, sapsap, salay ginto, squid, and sugpo.

Frozen fish products include tuna belly. There's a variety of frozen dimsums and frozen shell products such as shelled scallop. The meat section has everything you need from fresh cuts of sukiyaki beef to marinated preparations such as sisig, teriyaki, meatballs and pork longganisa.

As to the other sections of the supermarket, the most noticeable is the separation and organization of baby foods and products into one space. So getting the diapers and the milk is hassle-free as you won't go to different sections to get them.

Getting hungry and need something to nibble on? The Snack Section is the best place to be. The section has been organized to include

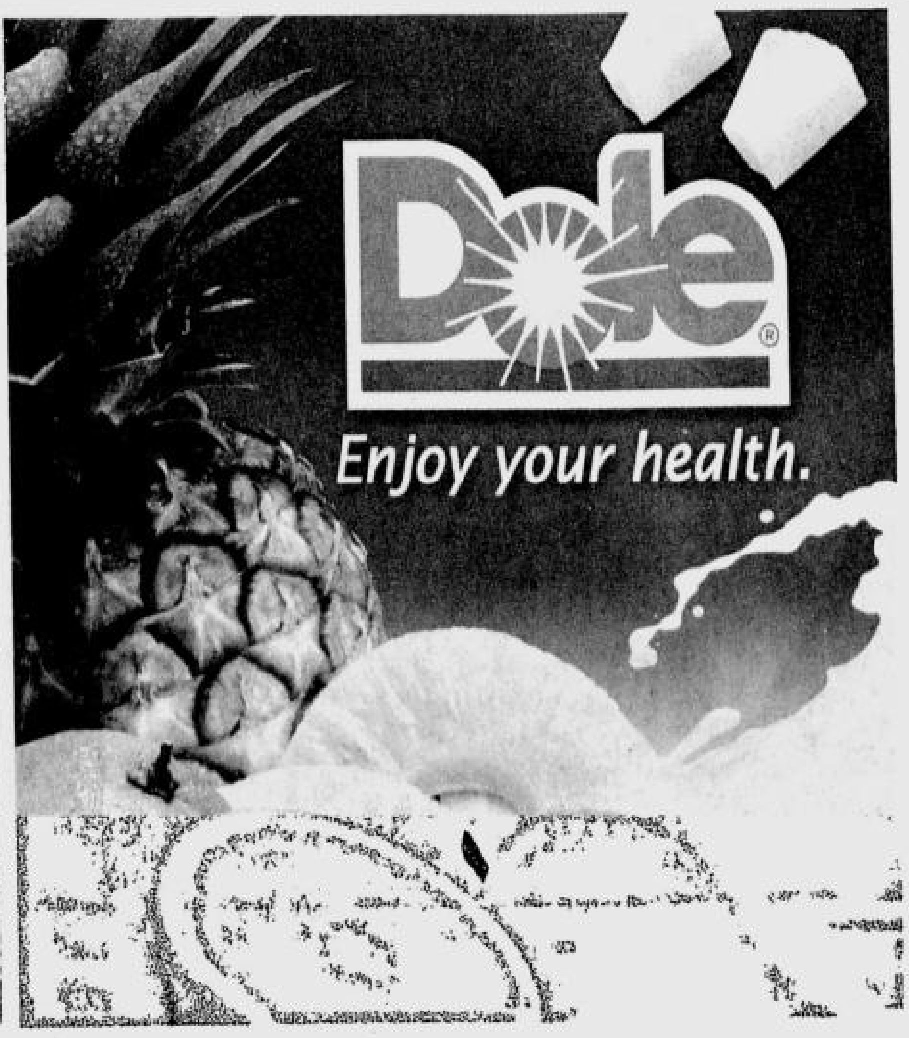
MEATS/D5

Congratulations!
The Celery Tree, Inc.

Congratulations
to
THE LANDMARK
on your 17th year
from
Gillette MACH3 Turbo

As to the other sections of the supermarket, the most noticeable is the separation and organization of baby foods and products into one space. So getting the diapers and the milk is hassle-free as you won't go to different sections to get them.

Get unbeatable two-in-one protection.
Sodium Fluoride helps protect teeth from cavities
Helps protect gums from gingivitis
Brush regularly and visit your dentist every 6 months.
New
with Sodium Fluoride
Teeth & Gum Defense
LISTERINE
Tough Teeth. Tough Gums.


Dole
Enjoy your health.

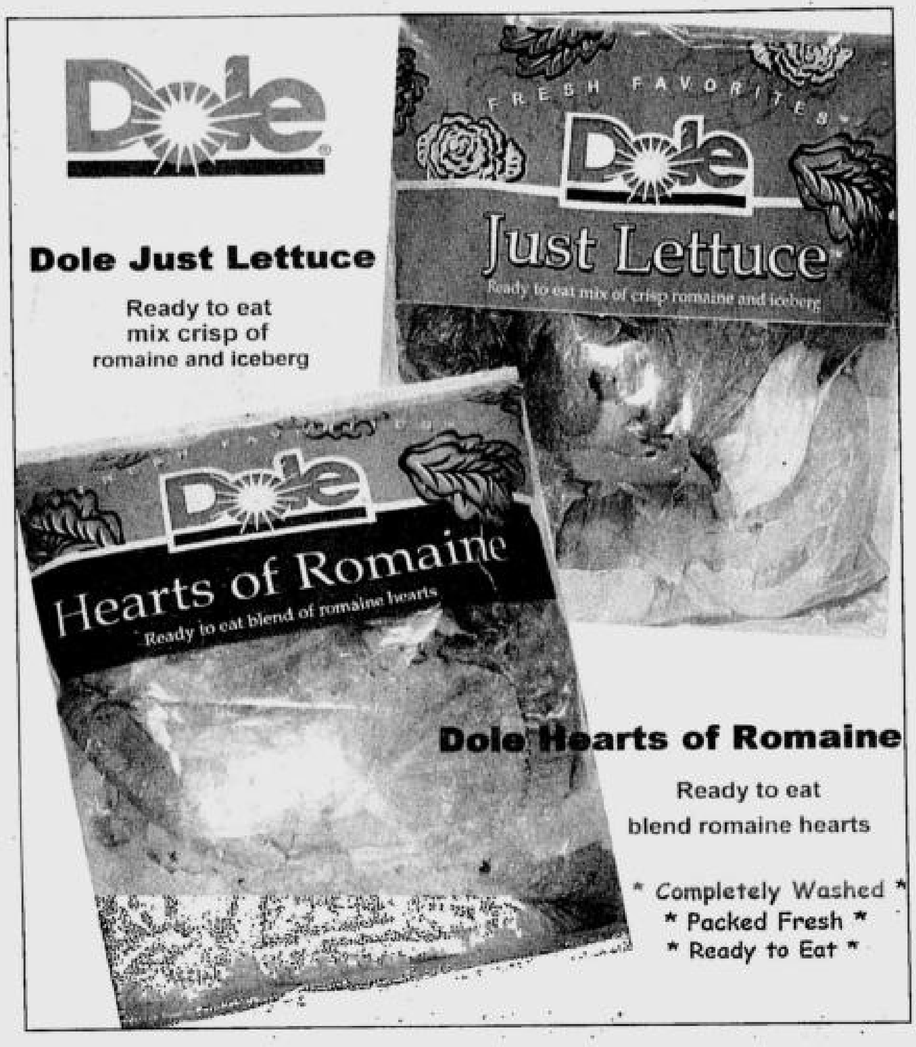
Check out very well stocked sections of fresh produce, meats and fish

From page D4

only edible stuff and things you'd consider snacking on, such as biscuits, cookies, chocolates, etc.

The renovation of the supermarket comes with colors too. From the previous oak white, Landmark's Supermarket now sports 11 colors, which made it brighter and cheerful. Space has been added through organizations of the sections so the alleys for carts are wider. The layout is well coordinated with visible signage for the sections and products.

Vinuya said the new Landmark Supermarket will generate more patrons and appeal to every member of the family.


FRESH FAVORITES
Dole
Just Lettuce
Ready to eat mix of crisp romaine and iceberg
Dole
Hearts of Romaine
Ready to eat blend of romaine hearts

Dole

Dole Just Lettuce

Ready to eat
mix crisp of
romaine and iceberg

Dole Hearts of Romaine

Ready to eat
blend romaine hearts

* Completely Washed *
* Packed Fresh *
* Ready to Eat *

Congratulations
to
THE LANDMARK
on your 17th year
from
DIZON
FARMS

PRO-V ®
Tide®
whisper®
Downy®
REJOICE
NEW ARIEL with ENERGIZERS
Safeguard™ Family Skin Germ Protection
NEW
Pampers®

A totally fresh new look

Landmark modified its supermarket to cater to consumers of today who are adapted to mobile lifestyles and fast-paced living

GONE are tight spaces, hard-to-find items, drab old layout and those things that add distress to already harried shoppers. The new Landmark Supermarket offers a fresh new look, wide cart paths, organized and easy-to-see items, walls with designs, and bigger fresh produce area. Landmark's Supermarket today offers a total refreshing ambience, enough to make the day of a shopper happy and less stressful.

Landmark's purchasing manager Mirriam Bona says the change happening over at Landmark's Supermarket is the store's return of gratitude to its customers. She says Landmark values its customers a lot and the new "reinvigorated" Supermarket is an added service to patrons of the store.

"For the non food category, we rearrange things so they are spotted easily. It's easier to shop and the time is less when you can find the items outright," she says.

The soap and shampoo section has more range of items on display since shoppers buy more of this stuff.

The Babyland section centralized all the things that are needed for baby's care. Food and non food baby care products such as diapers, powder, infant formulas, cereals, vitamins and many more are to be found here.

Bona says the segregation of the baby products into one place helps mothers do their shopping in a shorter time. "Most of our customers come from nearby offices and they can only do their shopping during lunch breaks or after office."

FRESH/D7

OFFICERS and staff of purchasing department

RAYMOND Lim, purchasing manager

JOE Gaba, supermarket store manager

TINA Dy, purchasing manager

MIRIAM Bona, purchasing manager

ICE CREAM
Nestlé
NEW!
Karambola
Nestlé Karambola
Nestlé Karambola
Also available in 100mL cups!
Magpalamig! Karambola na!

Congratulations
to
THE LANDMARK
on your 17th year
from

Glide
Ironing aid
Glide
Ironing aid
240mL
Glide
Ironing aid

Ambi Pur
CAR
Because You Love Your Car

36 years MONTEREY
MONTEREY Meatshop®
National Shopper's Choice Award 2004
Best Meat Establishment "AAA" Slaughterhouse Category The only Philippine Meat Establishment given the SEAL of EXCELLENCE
Philippine Business Excellence Award 2004 no.1 Premium Meat Shop
BEST MEAT ESTABLISHMENT
DA • DILG • DOH • DENR
http://www.montereyfoods.com

Mga kababayan,ang pambansang meatshop

Sa ibat't-ibang sulok ng Pilipinas, may mga MONTEREY MEATSHOPS na mabibilihan ng karneng de kalidad. magmula sa pagpapalaki hanggang sa pagbenta, sinisiguro ng MONTEREY na ang karne'y laging sariwa, malambot, malinis at puno ng sustansya.

Kinalakihan Ng Pilipino, Maipagmamalaki Sa Mundo

A totally fresh . . .

From page D6

The Snacks section now houses both local and imported stuff, so customers can really make intelligent choices when it comes to choosing the items they want.

The improvement of the store concentrated on the vegetable section. There are now a wide variety of fruits and vegetables and they are placed in lower display racks for easy pick up. Some fruits are sold in pre-sliced packs, such as ready-to-eat watermelons or pomelos. There are also mixed vegetables sold in small packs. Rice and sugar are more prominently displayed.

Bona says clutter was removed and more lighting flood the Supermarket. Plus, the walls come now with designs and the signages and labels of the sections are easy to read.

"The Supermarket's colors are bright and sunny. Esthetically we have improved the store for the customers' convenience," says Bona.

Bona says the improvement doesn't result with a price increase of the items. She says Landmark is more than happy with the upgrade.

"We want to make our customers happy. With the improvement that we've done, we want to make them feel that they are not taken for granted. We just want to let them know that we're doing something for them."

Bona says customers are already giving them a positive feedback with regard to the changes. "So far so good, our customers appreciate the changes."

HEALTHY SNACKING NEVER TASTED THIS SWEET!
NEW!
Del Monte
FRUIT express
GOLDEN SWEET SLICED PINEAPPLE
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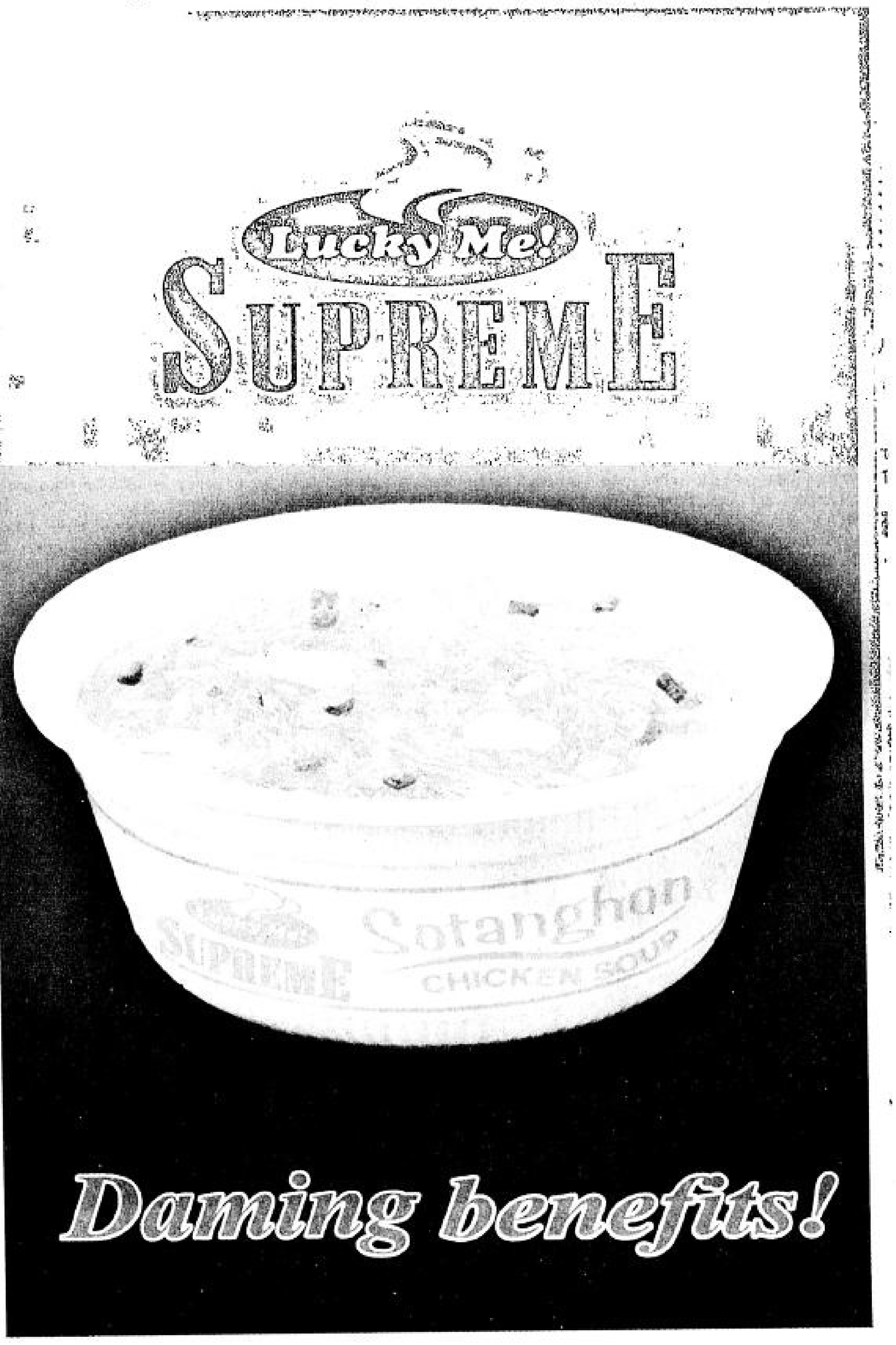
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Are you afraid of meat?

THINKING of banishing meat from your diet? That means giving up tapsilog, resisting sinigang, and shunning fillet mignon forever.

But giving up meat is not the answer if you want to stay healthy. We need meat protein for body building and muscle growth. Meats also supply us with iron, zinc and vitamin B12.

Here's what you can do: when shopping for pork and beef, think "lean". For best quality lean meats at the best price, buy only from Monterey. Because meats from animals grown in unsanitary backyard pens that are fed just about anything come out fatty and tough. Animals at Monterey are given proper nutrition and medication so they produce lean meats that are firm, fine-grained and pinkish.

Another key to a healthy enjoyment of meat is to eat the proper quantity. Health and food experts suggest eating 2 to 3 servings daily from the protein group of the food pyramid. One serving of meat is about 56 to 85 grams, a little smaller than the size of a deck of cards.

To prepare healthy meat dishes, consider baking as a healthful way to cook meat. Other good options are broiling and grilling which allow fat to drip away. Homemakers should also serve meat in combination with items from the other food groups to achieve a balanced diet in the household. One-dish meals like nilaga and pochero are classic Pinoy favorites that serve this purpose.

Moreover, if you want to guarantee the safety of the meats that you're serving the family, choose Monterey meats. Monterey's Cavite slaughterhouse is a Hall of Fame awardee as the Cleanest and Best Abattoir – given by the Department of Agriculture – National Meat Inspection Commission (DA-NMIC). It was judged based on sanitation practices, slaughterhouse design, protection of the environment and proper slaughtering standards. And even after the meats leave the abattoir and reach the Monterey Meatshops, there's no fear of contacting food borne illnesses because Meatshop personnel observe good personnel hygiene, regular cleaning of food contact surfaces and correct product handling (i.e. chilled storage and transport conditions).

With Monterey, there's no reason to be afraid of meat - because Monterey offers only safe, fresh-chilled, nutritious meats, and delicious easy-to-cook meat products that your family will love. Monterey meats are available in Monterey Neighborhood Meatshops and in leading supermarkets nationwide.

TERIYAKI BOY RECEIVES BUYER'S CHOICE AWARDS FOR 2004

Teriyaki Boy has once again been awarded as the Most Outstanding Japanese Restaurant for the year 2004 by the Buyer's Choice Awards. This event was organized by the Awards and Recognition Association of the Philippines who held this event at the Garden Ballroom of the Shangri-La's Edsa Plaza Hotel. A night filled with esteemed members of prestigious companies who have been bestowed of such honor. For the year 2004, , this is the fourth award that Teriyaki Boy has received. With the establishment's reputation for providing fast and efficient service and delectable Japanese cuisine, certainly it has proven itself worthy of receiving this award. Photo shows assistant general manager Ruth Litonjua and general manager Germin Espino receiving the award.

PHILIPPINE QUALITY AWARD HOLDS 7TH CYCLE AWARD

THE Philippine Quality Award (PQA) held its awarding ceremony for the 7th Cycle Award for 2004 at the Heroes Hall in Malacañang with Vice President Noli de Castro (4th from left) as guest of honor. With him in photo (from left): Juan B. Santos, Secretary, Department of Trade and Industry, Dr. Eduardo T. Gonzales, president, Development Academy of the Philippines; Maritess U. Bagaman, president, Philippine Society for Quality; Alberto Manlapit, senior VP, San Miguel Corp; Col. Alex T. Escaño, president Meralco Foundation Inc (MFI) and PQPM; and Jimmy Aquino, president PQA Foundation.

Doing away with wastefulness

HOW do you describe wastefulness? Leaving unnecessary lights on for long periods, putting too much food on the plate and having leftovers that can feed an army, or using clean paper when printing drafts instead of using scratch paper. The list goes on and the habit continues to form.

Adults should set a good example in doing away with wastefulness. This can be manifested by breaking the bad habit and resort to practicing the virtue of thriftiness. Adults should also go the extra mile to teach their young the value of saving at an early age.

The value of saving is illustrated in the ongoing campaign of The Real Bank, one of the country's foremost thrift banks. Dubbed "Bata…Bata…, Mag-impok at Magsinop," a joint initiative with the Department of Education (DepEd), the program wishes to instill in the younger generation, starting with grade school pupils, the importance of saving not just their money but also their available resources like school supplies, school uniform, and other personal belongings and household materials in order to help their parents minimize expenses.

The campaign also espouses children to put their savings in a bank, like The Real Bank. The Real Bank, through its Real Bank Kiddie Savers Club, accepts as low as P100 initial deposit from grade school students to help the young ones conveniently open an account. What's more, The Real Bank provides 5 percent per annum interest once the account maintaining balance of P500 is achieved. In this way, the youth will be motivated to save more for their own benefit.

To bolster this campaign, The Real Bank adopted the "ant," known for its industriousness and saving virtues, as the official mascot, and with the DepEd's help, came up with a story about an industrious ant called "Temyong Tipid."

The Real Bank, established 28 years ago, now has an expanded network of 24 branches within Metro Manila and nearby provinces including head office, particularly in Rizal. The bank has a new management team led by its Chairman of the Board, Jose G. Araullo.

DURANO HAILS CEBU'S TOURISM FEAT

Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano congratulates the province of Cebu for having the biggest number of tourist arrivals in the country in 2004 during the opening of "Cebu, More than the Usual…" at the Glorietta Activity Center. Durano displays the maiden issue of Southwall Magazine, a travel magazine featuring Visayas and Mindanao, which was launched during the Expo. With him is publisher Caroline Porras- Cagang. Cebu has also been selected to host the 2005 Ad Congress.

Hen Lin gets accreditation

CLEANLINESS and food safety has become a way of life at Hen Lin. This commitment to quality earned the company the much-coveted Hazard Analysis in Critical Control Points (HACCP) in food.

HACCP is actually a system, internationally recognized and designed to ensure food safety from receiving of raw materials up to dispatching.

There are seven elements that comprise the HACCP system. These are the identification risks (hazard analysis), establishment of Critical Control Points (CCP), and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), definition of critical limits (criteria), establishment of monitoring procedures, corrective actions, and verification and review of the whole system.

According to Elaine Villafuerte, Hen Lin's quality control analyst, even before qualifying for the accreditation, Hen Lin is already practicing a system on food safety to ensure quality of their products.

Hen Lin also passed the Good Manufacturing Practices accreditation done by the representatives from the National Meat Inspection Commission.

"It is part of the management's plan to hire quality control officers, train the people in the commissary as well as establish a quality assurance department to maintain the standards set in the company," Villafuerte said.

M&H Food Corp, owner of Hen Lin fast-food chain, has its commissary practice the HACCP system since 2002. A series of training on food safety and introduction to the HACCP system were conducted. A HACCP team was established and responsible for the formulation of HACCP Plans of certain products. The team is composed of different personnel representative of department areas in production, purchasing, dispatching, general services, and quality assurance.

Villafuerte also said personnel are trained every six months to refresh their memory and imbibe in their system the Hen Lin standards on food safety. Thus making it a way of life in the company.

"The accreditation would allow people to be aware that Hen Lin is not just any ordinary Chinese fast-food," Villafuerte said. "This will attest that the company is very much concerned on practicing food safety and is not only concerned on just the production side."

AMA-DENR BANTAY TAMBUTSO

More than 10,000 student volunteers from AMA Education System (AMAES) join in the government drive to clean the air. It recently launched the Bantay Tambutso, one of the Linis Hangin programs of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) which aims to arrest smoke belching vehicles in Metro Manila. Distributing masks to student volunteers are DENR Sec. Mike Defensor (middle), AMAES VP Johnny Ramos (left) and other DENR officials.

Appliance maker hits it big

CREDIBILITY is earned by gaining the respect and regard of peers, especially in a competitive industry like manufacturing, where the quality of products and the conduct of services are regularly appraised.

Camel Appliances Manufacturing Corp (Camel), one of the leading makers of household appliances in the country, never really thought or even dreamed of being awarded for its endeavors. Camel operations manager, Randy Fernandez, explained that producing products that thrive on quality and excellence for Filipinos has always been their mission.

"Ever since we started our operations 15 years ago, it has been our mission to provide more quality and affordable products to the public. Awards for us are just icing on the cake," Fernandez said.

It seems that winning awards has been a tradition for Camel, and this year was no different. After being conferred with the National Consumers Quality award for being the "Most Outstanding Appliance Brand and the "Best Appliance Brand" during the 18th Annual People's Choice Awards last 2002, this year, Camel was awarded with the Consumers Choice Awardee for Most Outstanding Brand in 2004 and the Most Outstanding Manufacturer of Electric Fans in the 15th Annual National Consumers' Awards.

"We do not just produce products, we have to complement them with speed and efficiency in production, competitive price range, and most importantly, good quality service. Now, more than ever, we are committed to provide our customers with quality products that give value for their money. This is Camel's responsibility to the Filipino consumer, that's why we dedicate ourselves to that commitment," adds Fernandez.

Established in August 1991, Camel started as a trading company with around 15 people, introducing its first product, the Gentle Breeze Fan. Later, they ventured in the design and manufacture of electric fans, and expanded by manufacturing industrial and exhaust fans, rice cookers, washing machines, gas stoves, flat irons, oven toasters, blenders, water dispensers, microwave ovens, turbo broilers, table scales during the 1990s.

Just recently, Camel ventured into the electronics industry by manufacturing TVs, TV PC (printed circuit) boards, and introduced their Vytron line of TV, DVD, VCD, and speaker systems. Camel also owns the distinction of being the first small appliance company with warehouses in Luzon, Visayas (Cebu) and Mindanao (Davao).

In this era of globalization, Camel has proven that there is no barrier to being a world-class company even if only operating locally, with Camel's ISO 9001:2000 certification for its globally-competitive manufacturing processes. This validates the company's global vision to become an aggressive Filipino industry champion in the future and gain worldwide recognition not just for Camel, but for the Philippines as well.

ProductFILES

Volvo XC90 chosen as Best Safety Package

BUILT with the world's most advanced safety features, a built-in respect for the environment, and handling that leaves other SUVs in the dirt, the Volvo XC90 clinched the Best in Safety Package award in the recent Car of the Year Awards held in Rockwell, Makati last Feb. 24. The XC90 All-wheel drive T6 tested by the country's most discerning group of journalists in the test fest held in November 2004 zoomed past other competitors in its category. This is the CAGI's first foray in giving out awards to car manufacturers in the Philippines. More than 40 members of the media tested and judged the cars on style, design, handling, comfort and a host of other criteria. More than 50 cars underwent rigid assessment during the test fests. The votes were tabulated by an independent organization, Sycip, Gorres and Velayo. In Manila, Viking Cars, Incorporated is the official distributor of Volvo cars. The Volvo Makati office, showroom and Aftersales Service Center are located at 2272 Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City while Volvo Ortigas Center is located at 88 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. The 2005 Volvo automobile line includes the all-new S40 compact sedan and V50 sportswagon, the sporty S60, the flagship S80 luxury sedan, the rugged Cross Country and the all-new XC90 AWD. For details and inquiries, please call 893-6621 to 22 (Makati Showroom) or 637-0414 to 15 (Ortigas Showroom).

RIDGEWOOD RESIDENCE INAUGURATION

Ridgewood Resources and Development Corp recently opened its 51-room hotel/apartelle, Ridgewood Residence at 17 Julian Felipe Street, Barangay Lualhati, Baguio City. Present at the ribbon cutting ceremony are (from left): Mayor Braulio D. Yaranon, Baguio City; Rodolfo C. Kalalang, president and board chair, Ridgewood Resources and Development Corp; Raymundo Castro, vice president, corporate banking division, BPI; Hsieh Jen-Jung, president, Wu Huang-Lu Co Ltd; Vice Mayor Peter Ray Bautista, Baguio City and Mary Bilagot, representative, DOT-CAR. For inquiries and reservations, please call Ridgewood Residence at (074) 446-6295 or Bulacan Sales Office at (044) 794-1924.

APC students top digital arts competition

ASIA Pacific College proves once again the excellence of its Multimedia Arts undergraduate degree program when it fielded its powerhouse team composed of Jefferson Estrabinio, Ian Comandante and Jedidah . Dumawal in the 1st Ateneo ACTM Intercollegiate New Media Awards "Numina" Digital Arts Competition. Held last Feb. 15, at the Eastwood Cybermall, these ABMA students bagged the top three slots: Jefferson took home the first prize: Ian, second; Jedidah clinched the third place, thereby claiming all major sports for team APC. Entries were designed and/or developed by the contestants using any computer program. Graphics, photos, text, and other multimedia elements used in the creation of the graphics were all original based on the overall theme "Back and Forth". Partner organizations from participating schools fielded teams to represent Them: Ateneo De Manila, University of Sto. Tomas, De La Salle CSB, De La Salle University, University of Asia and the Pacific, Technological Institute of the Philippines and, Assumption College.